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COVER PHOTO: Alex Lifeson by Mark Weiss

VOL 1, No. 9
JULY 84

GUITAR FOR THE PRACTICING MUSICIAN

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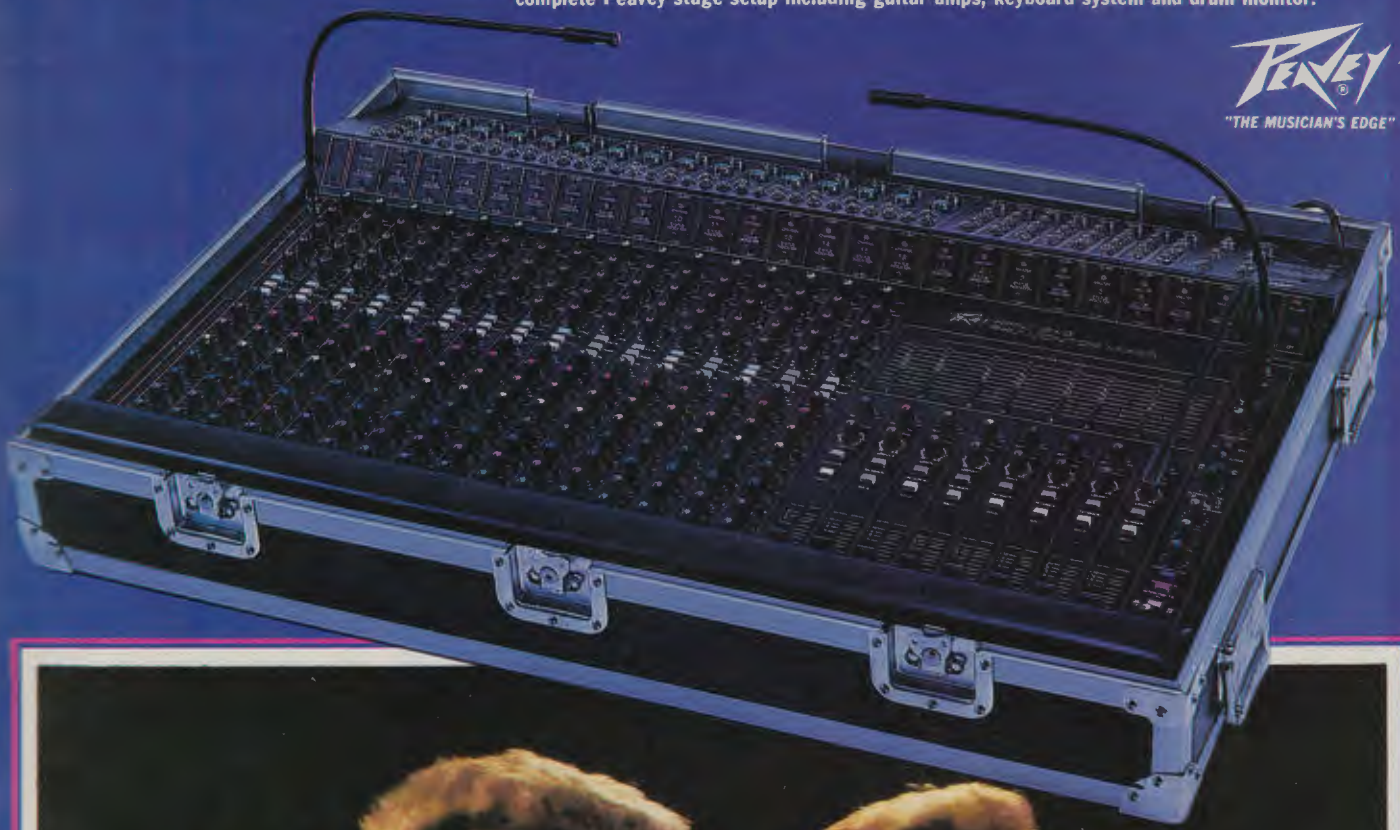

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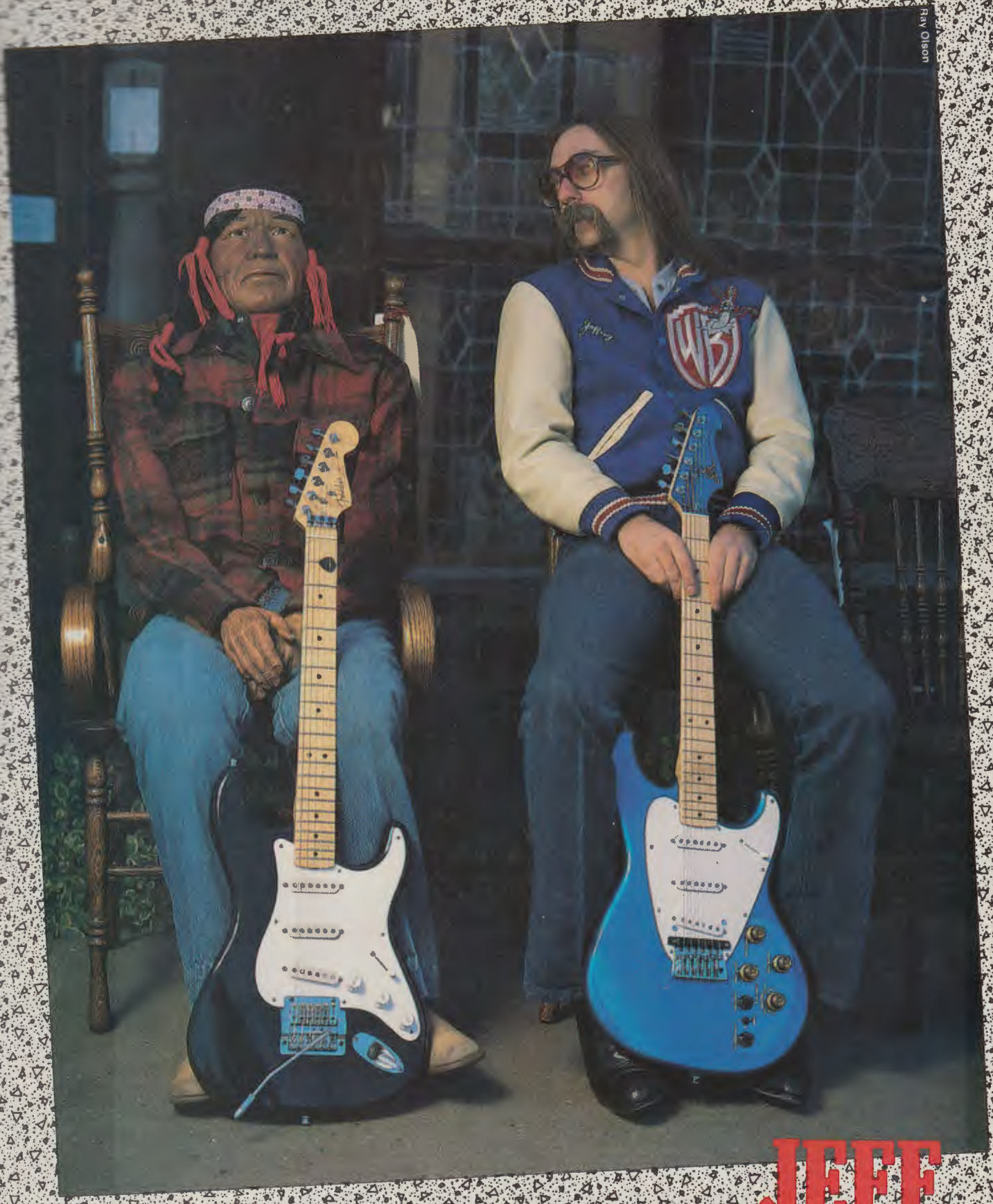

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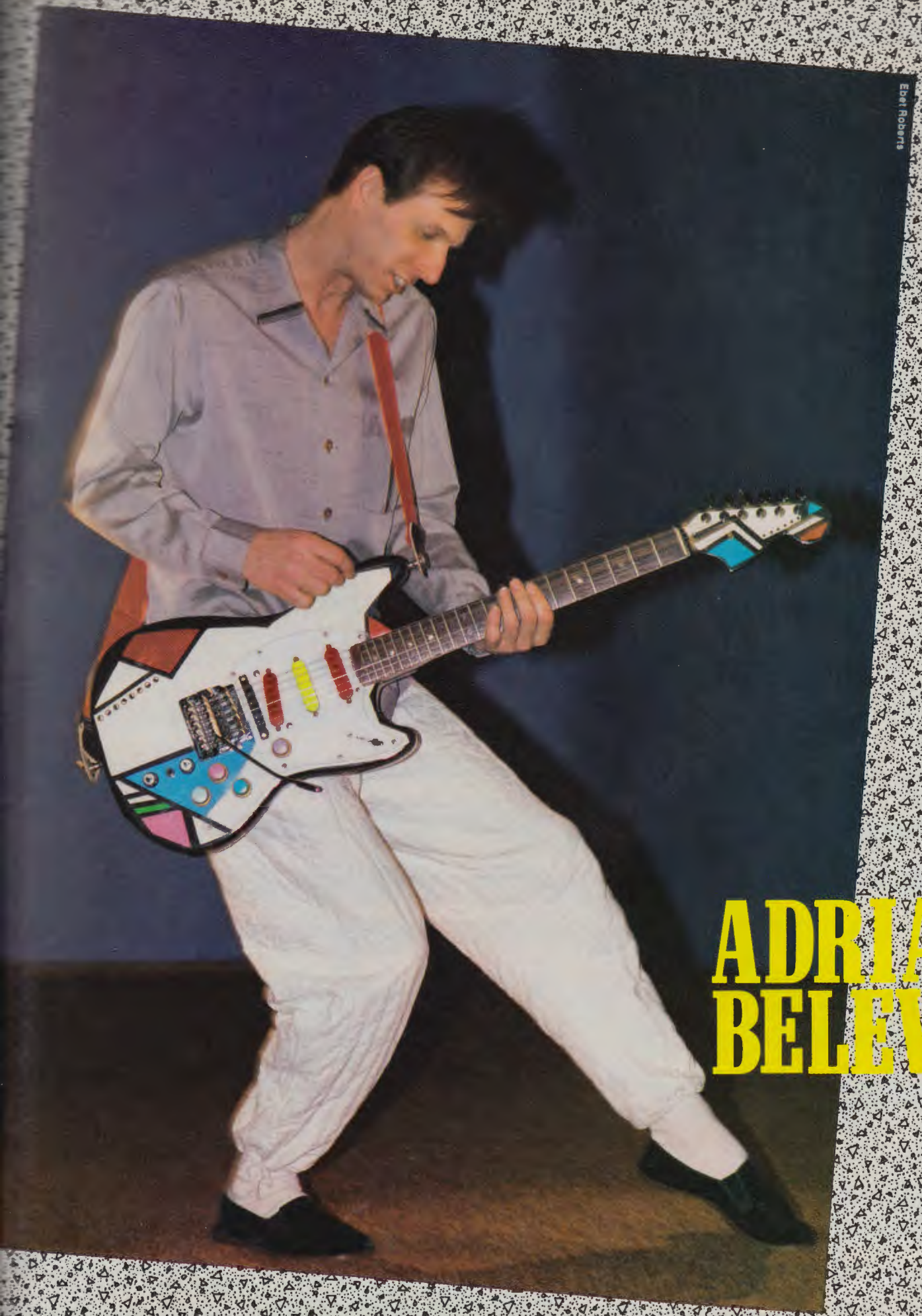

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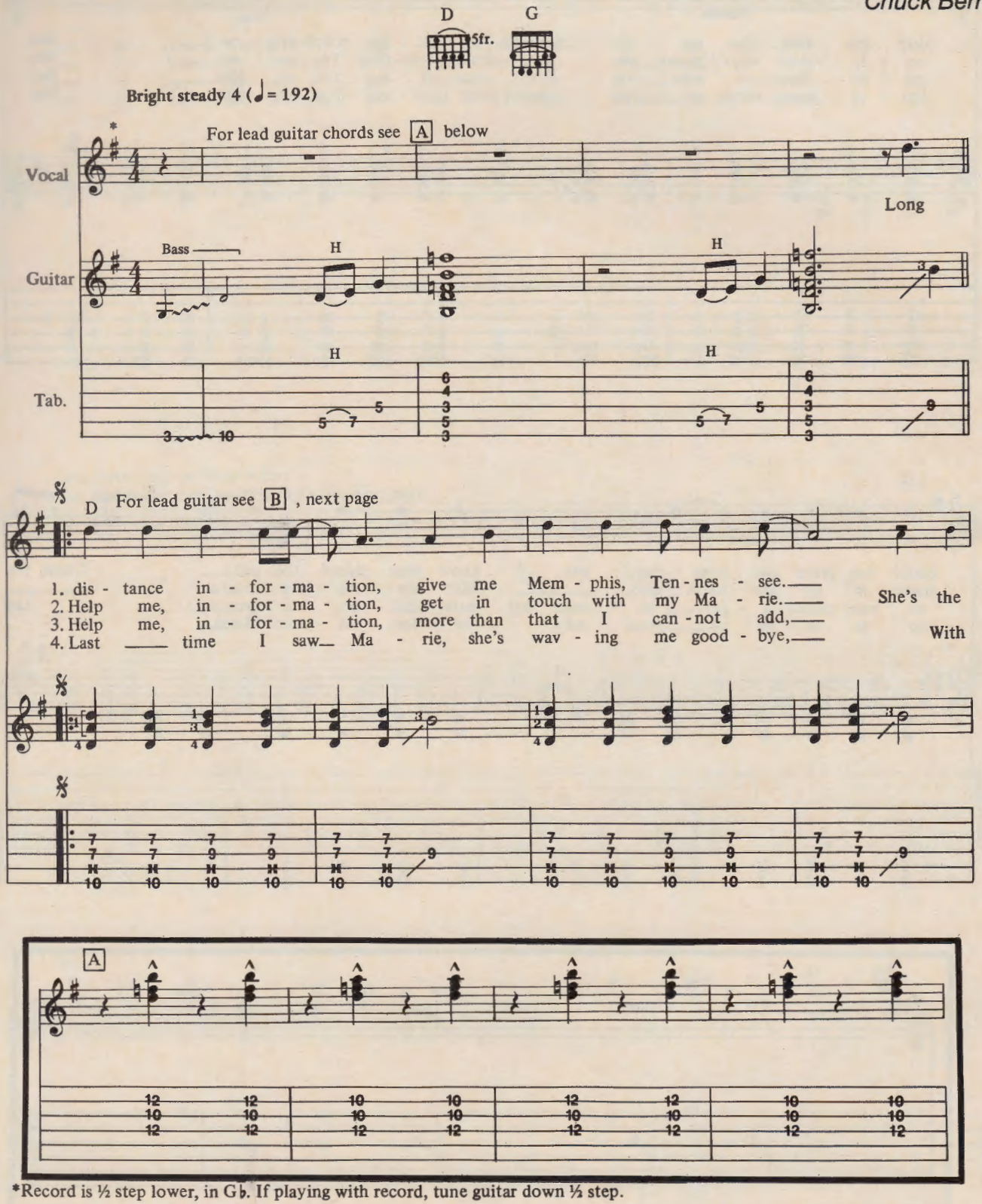
Tablature Explanation see pg. 92

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

As recorded by Chuck Berry
(From the single/ERIC E-1976)

Words and Music by
Chuck Berry



*Record is ½ step lower, in G♭. If playing with record, tune guitar down ½ step.

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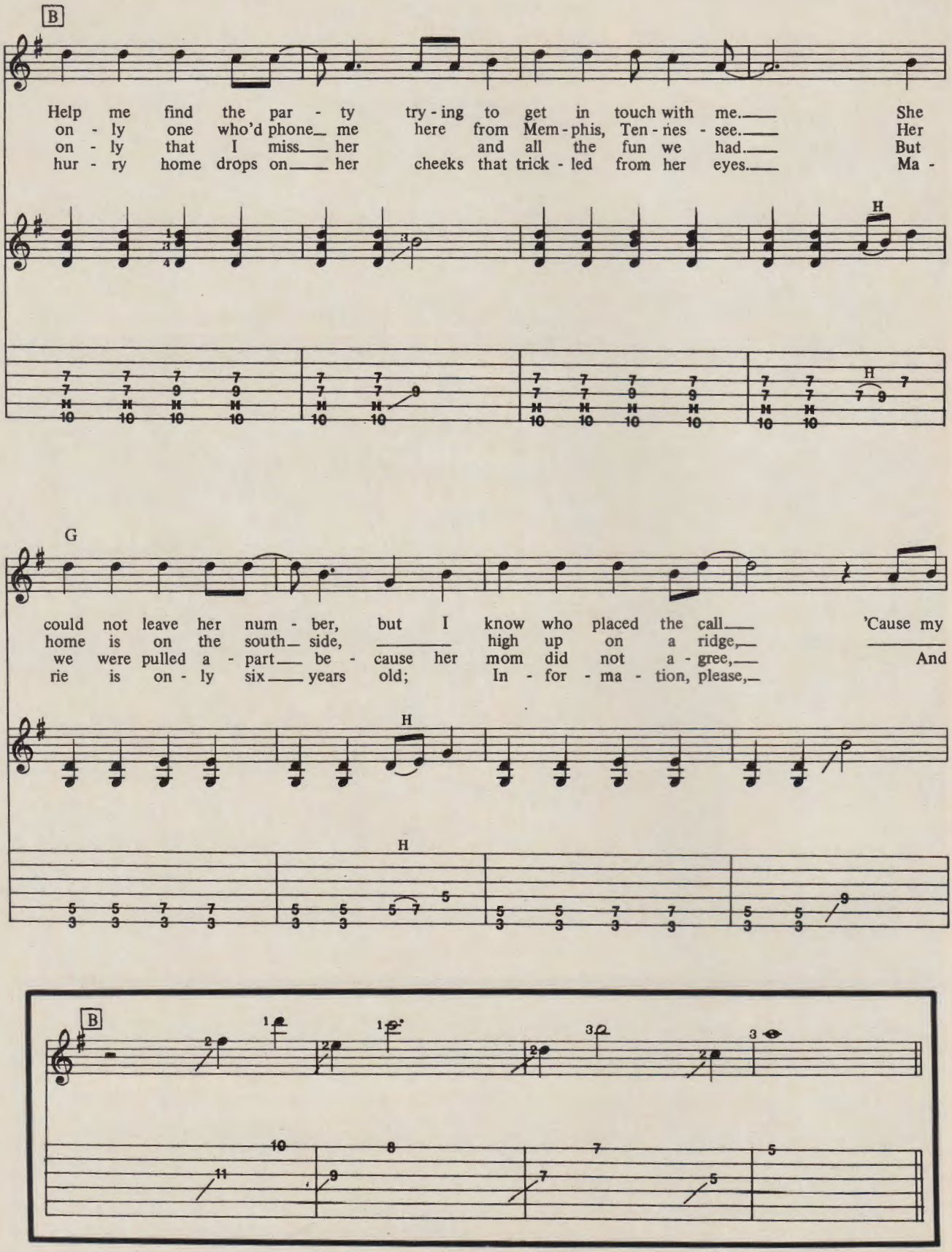
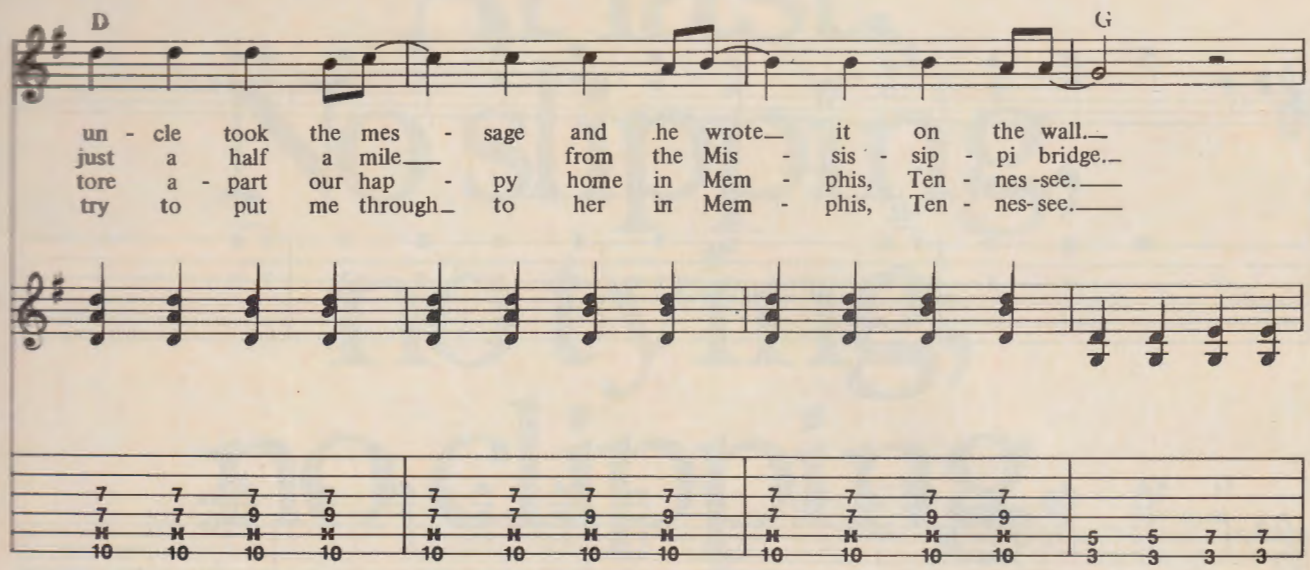
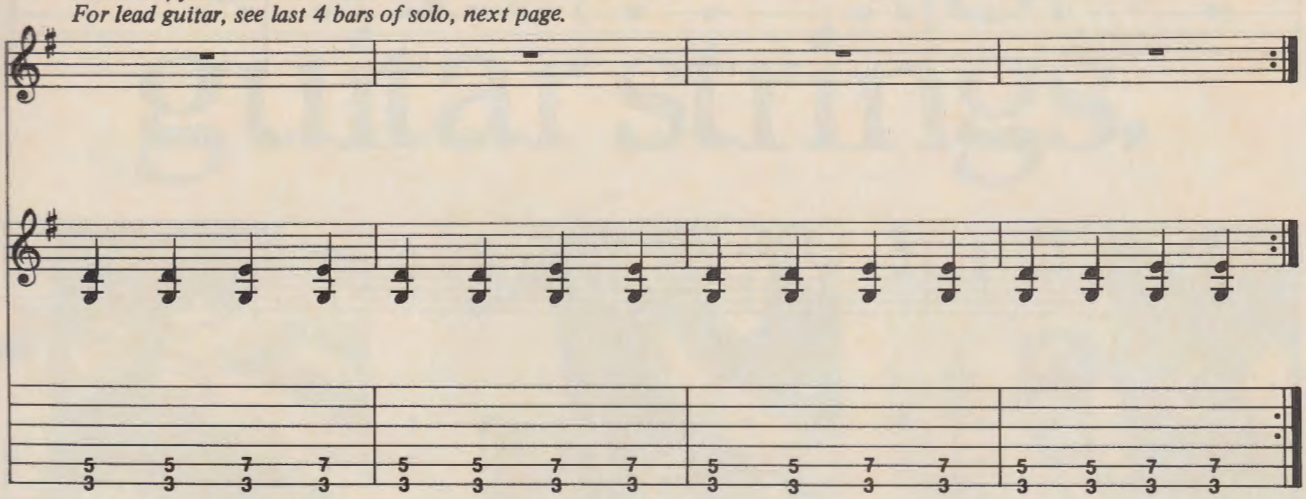
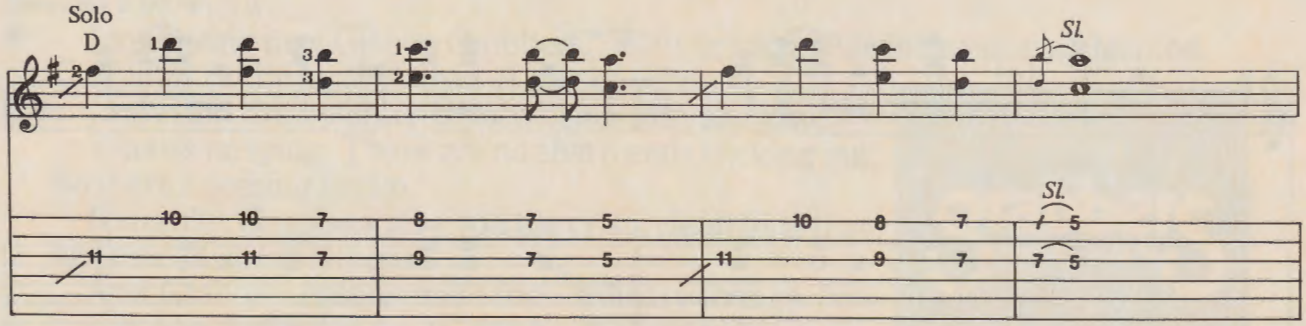
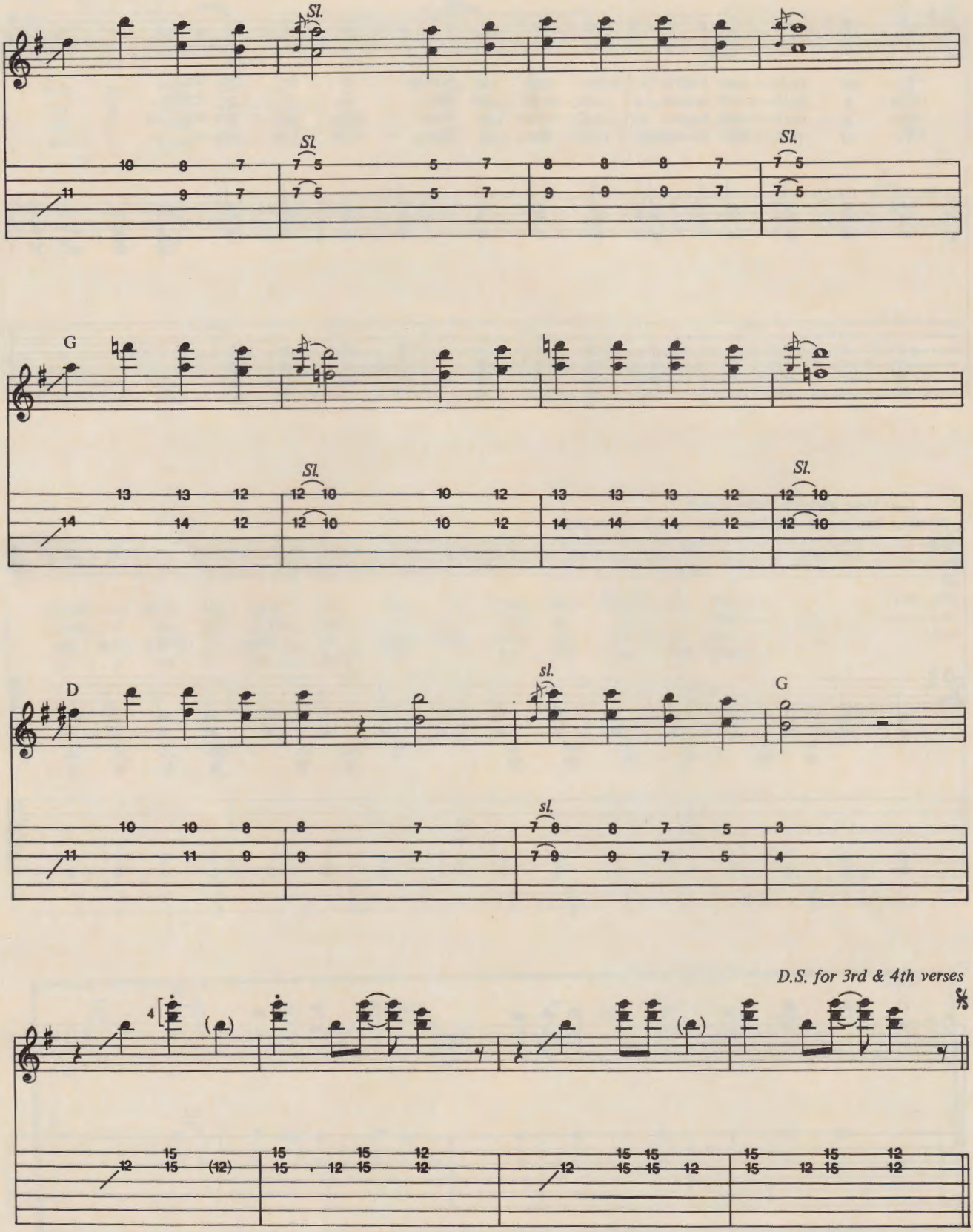

B
Help me find the par - ty try - ing to get in touch with me. She
on - ly one who'd phone me here from Mem - phis, Ten - nes - see. Her
on - ly that I miss her and all the fun we had. But
hur - ry home drops on her cheeks that trick - led from her eyes. Ma -
H
G
could not leave her num - ber, but I know who placed the call 'Cause my
home is on the south side, high up on a ridge,
we were pulled a - part be - cause her mom did not a - gree, And
rie is on - ly six years old; In - for - ma - tion, please,
H
H
B



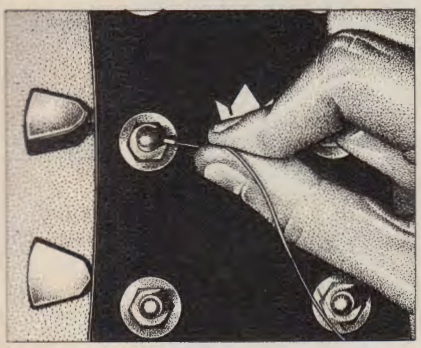
Last time, fade on these 4 bars
For lead guitar, see last 4 bars of solo, next page.



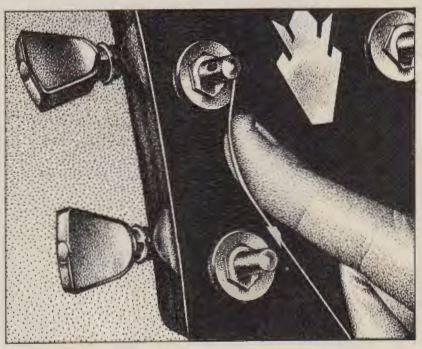



Sl.
G
D
sl.
D.S. for 3rd & 4th verses

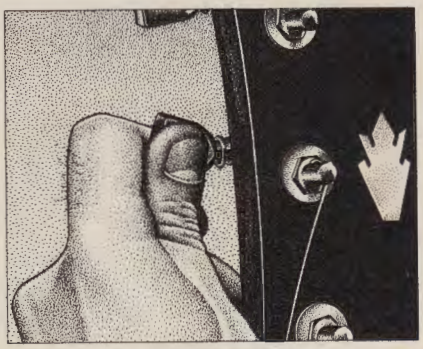
At last. No slipping, no tying, no clipping, no pricking, guitar strings.



Insert Grip Tip.



Bend the string.



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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Some familiar faces are in unaccustomed places in this issue of **GUITAR.** Elliott Randall, appearing in his final Pluggin' In column, will be taking over our Guitar Secrets page for the next few months, as Rick Derringer retires to enjoy some of the fruits of his successes producing Weird Al Yankovic.

In the Portrait Gallery the familiar face of Chuck Berry, recently inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame, graces our pages for the first time. In our own tribute to him, we're printing the music to *Memphis, Tennessee.* Buck Dharma, who is hardly seen anywhere outside of his Connecticut domain, appears for a short chat, alongside *Burnin' for You.* And check out that fabulous photo of Buck in concert. Finally, Jay Jay French, who is never seen out of his makeup, is caught On the Radio, waxing quite eloquent on the struggle for rock stardom.

(**GUITAR** wishes to congratulate Jon Heinlein of Kansas, Illinois, who is the winner of the Guild guitar.)

Letters

Dear Editors,

I enjoyed your January issue and look forward to your Bluesbreaker solo of *Steppin' Out*! I also like Sammy Hagar's work on *Standing Hampton*. I would like to see the seminal artists presented—the blues as well as early rockers of the 60's. Many of today's rockers are sometimes ignoring melody. It's good to see your magazine promoting music as a whole. My first love is the blues, but hard rock/heavy metal is a close second. Keep the spirit up. Keep growing, but don't lose sight of your roots.

Dr. Richard Mento
Davenport, Iowa

P.S. By the way, I am a chiropractor and chiropractic helps a lot with music. If you need any advice, just let me know.

Dear Bruce and John,

Now that you've lowered your standards to include:

A) Boy (Girl) George pictures that I wouldn't wipe my ass with;

B) Billy Zoom interviews—why don't he zoom back to the cave he came from;

C) Aztec Camera articles—what's an Aztec Camera anyway?

What are you going to do for an encore? But wait! Coming next month—no, it isn't. Yes, it is!! Duran Duran!! (Squeal). The motherless morons of musical masterpieces prepare to bore every guitarist in the world with insights into how they write those incredibly silly tunes. If this letter sounds slanderous, it is. When are you going to get serious and leave Duran Duran and Girl George to juvenile media like Circus and MTV.

Also, next time you see Paul Dean, ask him:

A) Why he has to make those bimbo faces;

B) Why the lyrics are written for 13-year old girls;

C) Where does he get off calling a limp band like Loverboy heavy metal?

Mike DeSensi
Pittsburgh, PA

Dear **GUITAR,**

In the March 1984 issue you printed an interview on Roddy Frame, guitarist for Aztec Camera. He made a comment about Eddie Van Halen in which he said, "He must be one of the worst guitarists ever. He's really tasteless in what he plays." Then why is Eddie constantly being voted as best rock guitarist in many magazines? Why have Van Halen's first five albums gone platinum? Why is everyone trying to copy his style? That shoots Roddy Frame's statements to hell. Frame calls Mr. Van Halen tasteless, but it seems to me that Frame should put his guitar where his mouth is.

David Kelly
Holland Patent, NY

Dear **GUITAR,**

I have been playing guitar now for three years. About two months ago I formed a band and thanks to your magazine we now have enough songs to play gigs. This is the perfect magazine for any rock guitarist.

Dan Hawkins
E. Pepperell, MA

GUITAR,

Def Lep Elliott lost fans with his comments in Texas. Clark and Collen just lost at least one with their comments regarding M. Schenker. Recorded or live, UFO or MSG, Schenker's playing is brilliant. Personally, I prefer MSG's material, but one thing I know Schenker doesn't need is guidance. I guess that Clark/Collen feel one good year gives them the right to voice their opinion on a ten year plus career of one of the best. Also, speaking of weak material: have they read the words to all their songs? I wonder what they would have had to say about other dual leads: Murray/Smith, Downing/Tipton.

T. Isaacs
Whittier, CA

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Elliott Randall

GUITAR SECRETS

False Harmonics

Elliott Randall is a prominent New York studio guitarist, who has worked with Steely Dan, Ashford & Simpson and Carly Simon.

On this, my first installment of GUITAR SECRETS, I'd like to expand on Rick Derringer's lesson with harmonics, which was in the May issue of **GUITAR.** If you play at the 12th fret you'll notice that you have the best sounding open harmonics at that point. Using that logic, if you stick your entire first finger across the first fret, then those harmonics get moved up one fret, or a half step to the 13th fret. We then discover the axiom that no matter where you play with your left hand, if you're 12 frets higher you get a big fat-sounding harmonic.

Let's try it with a C chord. First, make a regular first position C chord with your fretting hand. Hold the pick between your first finger and your thumb, and stick your third finger out straight in front of them in a line. Use this finger to make the harmonic. It may help if you stick your elbow out a little. Another way to make the harmonic is with your first finger, while your thumb strikes the string. Or you can reverse your fingers for the same functions. Remember, you want to strike the notes of the C chord 12 frets above each note. The harmonic notes would be 15th fret A string, 14th fret D string, 12th fret open G string, 13th fret B string and 12th fret open E string.

The position markers (dots) on the fretboard will be helpful here. Most electric guitars have a double dot at the 12th fret. You look three frets up and you've got a dot that corresponds to the dot on the 3rd fret. You look two frets higher and you'll have a dot that corresponds to the 5th fret marker. Look two frets up from there and there's a dot that corresponds to the one on the 7th fret. Looking at these dots is a good way of figuring out what goes on above the 12th fret without feeling like it's no man's land, or you're stuck in a certain kind of soloing that you can only do by position because you're relating it to a chord. What happens is, the guitar becomes friendlier up there because you realize that it's an exact duplicate an octave higher.

Let's do a C scale in false harmonics. I'll give you the position for your right hand and you figure out where your left hand belongs. The scale starts on the A string 15th fret, then the open D at the 12th fret, D on the 14th then 15th fret, open G on the 12th, G on the 14th, open B on the 12th, and finally B on the 13th fret.

Here's a good move where your right hand slaps the strings and the rest of the notes are hammer-ons. Place your first finger on the 3rd fret A string and hit the C note on the 15th fret with the first finger of your right hand. Don't make a false harmonic, just slap. You will get a note that is both a harmonic and the fundamental note iself. After striking this note, hammer with your second and third fingers to the C# and D on the 4th and 5th frets respectively. Repeat the same strike and hammer action on the D string. Then bar the 3rd fret D, G and B strings with your first finger. It appears to be a B♭ but in this case see it as a Gm7. In order to get the desired sound, your first finger will have to slap the 15th fret D, G and B strings. The last notes are the G on the 5th fret D string, slapped on the 17th fret by the right hand, followed by the D note on the A string in the same fret, F on the D string with the 15th fret slap, followed by the G on the D string and a 17th fret slap. The last note is the G on the low E with a 15th fret slap.

When you hit the string with your finger it's making the string vibrate differently from the way the plectrum does. You're attacking with a bazooka more than with your usual bullet. ■

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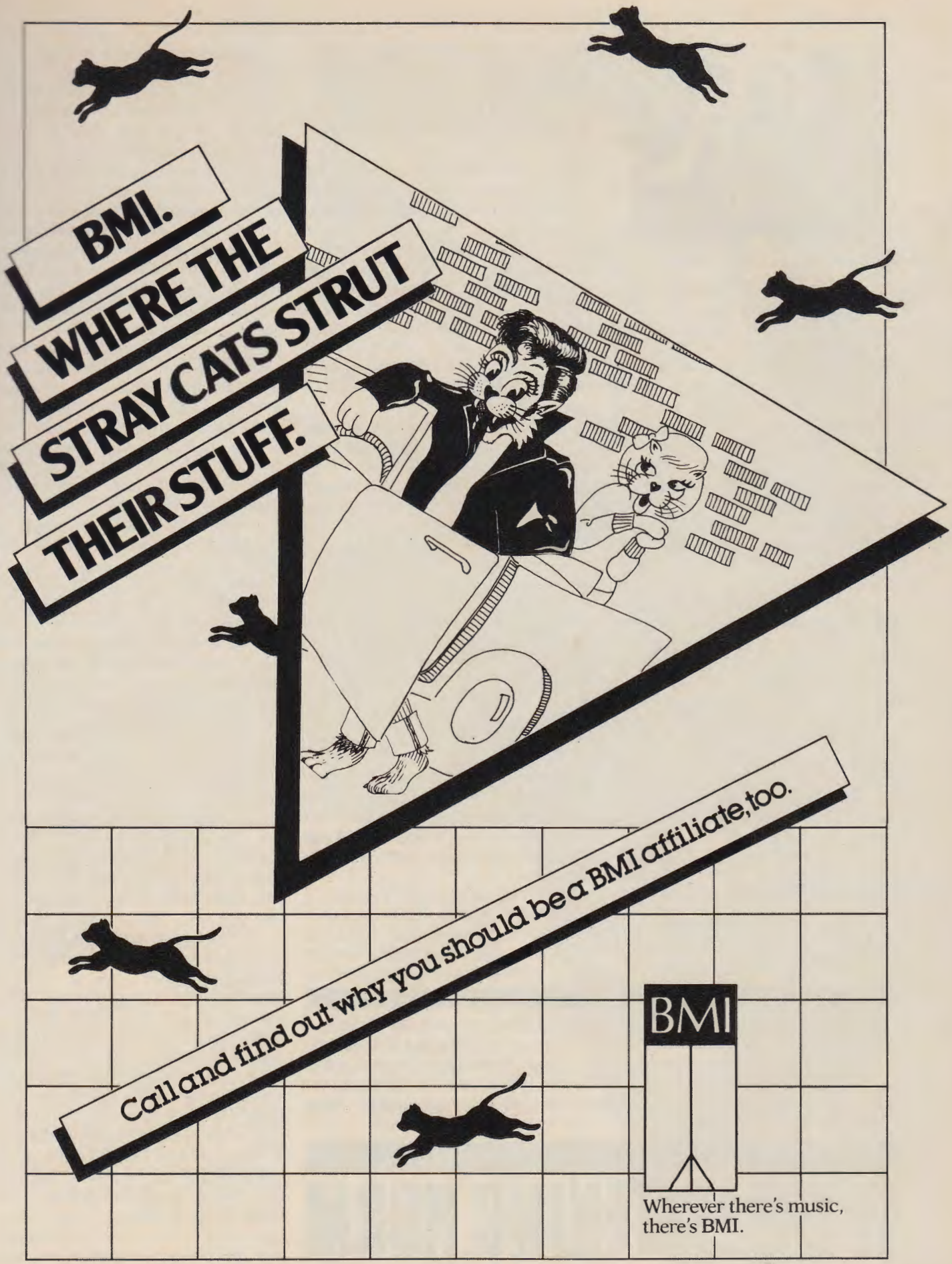

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L-R: UDO DIRKSCHNEIDER; JORG FISCHER; WOLF HOFFMAN; PETER BAITES; STEFAN KAUFMANN

1. *Blackout* from **Blackout,** by the Scorpions, Mercury SRM-1-4039

WOLF: I know that song. It's the best one they've done. It has a brilliant melody, chorus and verse. The guitar playing is also brilliant. I don't like how it's produced. It's similiar to almost every Scorpions song. They play too much guitar, especially in the background. They are doing it totally different from how we do it. They do bass guitar, rhythm guitar and hundreds of guitars in the background. The lead player is playing and the singer is singing. That is all a bit too much. I like the singer a lot. I like the composition and the guitar playing. But I think it's better if you've got a small section where the guitar should play a solo. Then everybody can see what the guitarist is like and what he has to say to an audience or listener. They're doing it the other way around and spend the whole time playing.

GUITAR: You called the guitar playing brilliant. What makes it shine?

WOLF: He has good technique. He's a very fast and very clean player. He doesn't do cheap tricks or cheap effects which is not good playing. He is really playing every note and it shows on this song.

2. *Rock in America* from **Midnight Madness,** by Night Ranger, MCA 5456

WOLF: I would bet it's an American band, because you have got the keyboards and the massive background vocals. I like it a lot. It's a good song and typically American. The melody is strong but it's a bit too much with the keyboards. Personally, I hate keyboards. They make a big background sound with this flowing texture. The guitars weren't loud enough and the keyboard takes away some of the power and edge. There were two different guitar players and I liked the second one more. Who is this?

GUITAR: Night Ranger.

WOLF: I wondered how that second solo was done. I've never heard anything like that before. Something else I liked was the tremolo going down like a police car. I'm not so sure if the production was so good, but that's a problem with the keyboards. American bands like Styx use a lot of keyboards and do their background vocals perfectly. European bands can never do that. I don't know why. We are not an American band so we don't want to play that style. We are more aggressive. We also aren't the best background singers. Sometimes we use football kind of background vocals, where everybody's shouting.

3. *Jawbreaker* from **Defenders of the Faith,** by Judas Priest, Columbia FC 39219

WOLF: This is the best I've heard so far. It's a very strong composition and the melody of the vocals is perfect. I like Judas Priest. Sometimes they are well produced and sometimes not. I think the best they have done is **British Steel.** On this new album, the production is the worst they've done but the compositions are the best they've done. They've got quite a lot of sound effects in there, and nearly everything on this album they've done before. On **British Steel** everything fits well together. On **Screaming for Vengeance** I think they did their worst guitar work. This one is a big step forward. The guitar work is very good on this song, but I don't like the production. I don't think the guitarists in Judas Priest are very good. The band is brilliant together but separately, as guitarists, I think they are just average. Personally, I don't like the style of how they solo. Every single note is not played strongly. It's not exact enough and lots of their solos have no melody in them.

4. *Lodi* from **Texas Cannonball,** by Freddie King, Shelter Records SW-8913

WOLF: I wish I could play like this. The style is not new and up-to-date. I'm not sure who it is but it's not HM or heavy rock, it's rhythm and blues. It's a good feeling and it's got fun. You can hear the singer and the guitar player have fun. That's the most important thing, that the listener can feel the fun the musicians had. He's not a very good guitarist if you look at the technique he's using. It's very simple, but that doesn't matter at all as long as you can convince me. He did. I would say that music is the basic background for developing HM music and rock. There's no doubt about that.

5. *Fool in the Rain* from **In Through the Out Door,** by Led Zeppelin, Swan Song SS 16002

WOLF: This doesn't say anything to me. To be honest I don't like that kind of pop music. The solo was ugly. He's not a very good guitar player. The composition was just an average radio song which you can play while you clean out your car.

GUITAR: That was Led Zeppelin.

WOLF: I can't believe it. Normally everybody is saying Page is such a good guitarist. He is, but on this it's not good at all. ■

Wolf Hoffman

ACCEPT

Already major stars in Europe, Accept's first entry into the American market, **Balls to the Wall,** marks them as anything but debutantes. In fact, these guys stand the best chance of exporting German metal to American arenas. To find out how he saw himself and the band as part of the overall picture, we gave guitarist Wolf Hoffman a transatlantic ticket and put him in the Listening Room.

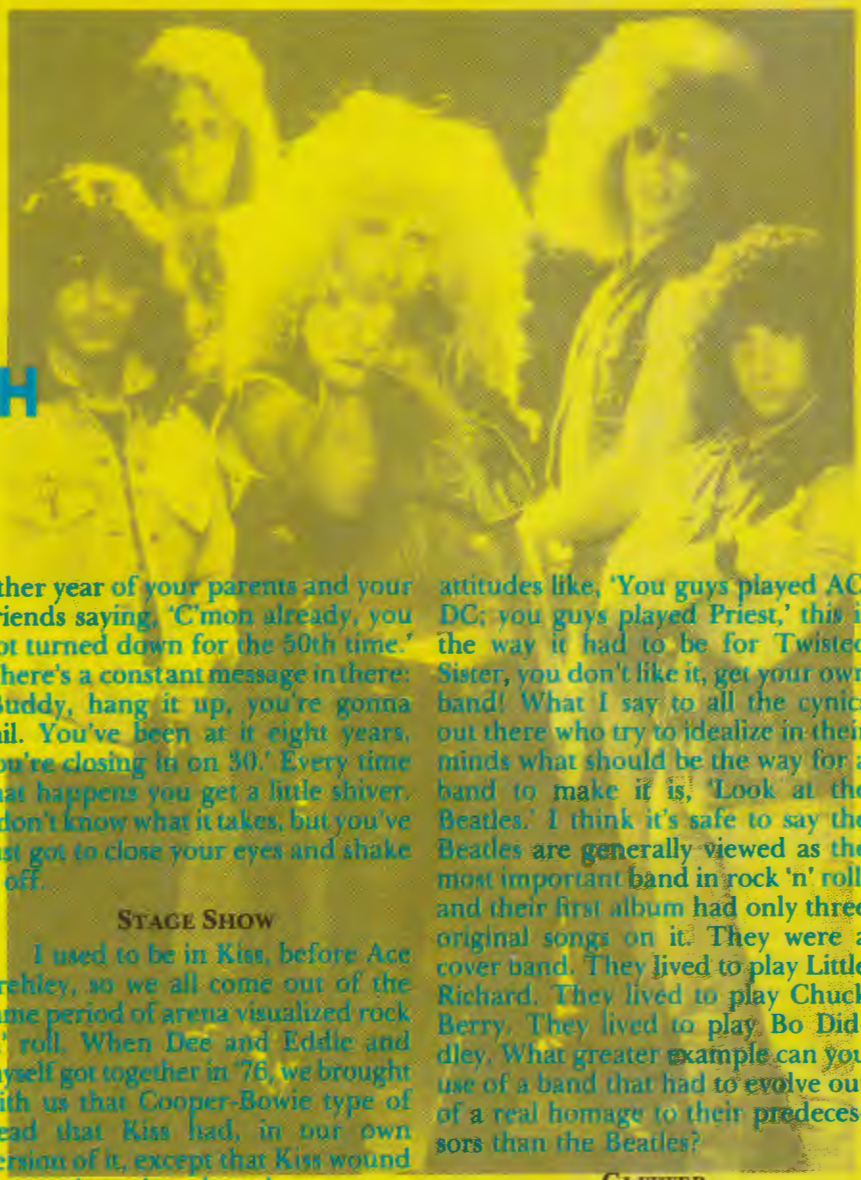
Musical Selections by John Stix

IN THE LISTENING ROOM

On the Radio

Interview by Peter Gordon

TWISTED SISTER'S JAY JAY FRENCH



When Boy George came out of the closet last year in Culture Club, it seemed to outrage a lot of people. But, for one reason or another, even the most macho rock bands have been dressing in drag: heels, eye makeup, bouffant hairdos, for years, going back to the New York Dolls and Alice Cooper. Certainly the line between England's Boy George and the fashion plates in New York's Twisted Sister is, forgive the expression, a straight one indeed. Further delving toward the bleached roots of this musical stance, we put Twisted Sister's guitarist Jay Jay French on the radio.

Out of all the bands in the Tristate area that developed with Twisted Sister over an eight-year period of time, only one other band reached success and that was Zebra. I knew over 100 bands; each band had an average of five guys—that's 500 guys out there trying to make it. The odds are unbelievable. You go to bed at night and you say to yourself, another year has gone by. Every birthday another door closes behind you, another option is shot, another potential year of schooling that could lead to a stable job, another year of your parents and your friends saying, 'C'mon already, you got turned down for the 50th time.' There's a constant message in there: 'Buddy, hang it up, you're gonna fail. You've been at it eight years, you're closing in on 30.' Every time that happens you get a little shiver. I don't know what it takes, but you've just got to close your eyes and shake it off.

Stage Show

I used to be in Kiss, before Ace Frehley, so we all come out of the same period of arena visualized rock 'n' roll. When Dee and Eddie and myself got together in '76, we brought with us that Cooper-Bowie type of head that Kiss had, in our own version of it, except that Kiss wound up getting signed and went way ahead of us. So it looks like we're new, but in fact we've been honing our image for a very long time. The image we try to project is that you come to see us and we'll warp your sense of what is visually acceptable to your head and we'll blow your face off with energy and good music and you'll walk out having had an amazingly good time. We treat the stage like a football field. We're like linebackers for the NFL. Behind every linebacker is a juvenile delinquent, right? But he's learned to channel his aggression. We get out on that field and we kill you. Off-stage we're nice quiet guys.

Cover Band

We were a cover band and we're not ashamed of it. It was our beginning. We say to people who have attitudes like, 'You guys played AC/DC; you guys played Priest,' this is the way it had to be for Twisted Sister, you don't like it, get your own band! What I say to all the cynics out there who try to idealize in their minds what should be the way for a band to make it is, 'Look at the Beatles.' I think it's safe to say the Beatles are generally viewed as the most important band in rock 'n' roll, and their first album had only three original songs on it. They were a cover band. They lived to play Little Richard. They lived to play Chuck Berry. They lived to play Bo Diddley. What greater example can you use of a band that had to evolve out of a real homage to their predecessors than the Beatles?

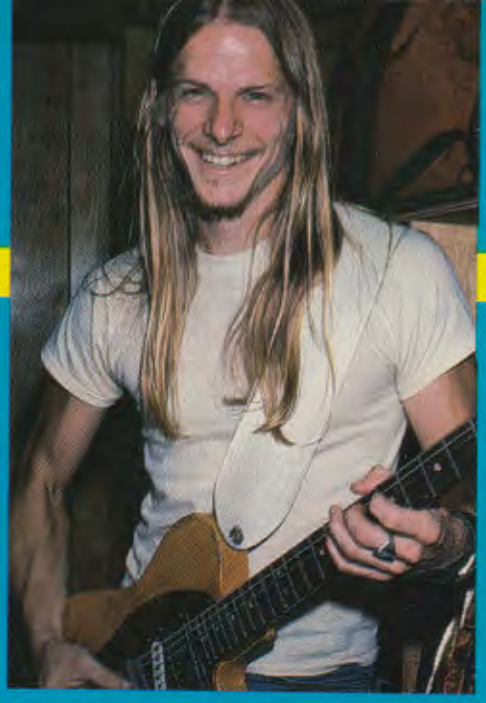
Glitter

Metal is just super-amplified blues that has now been contorted with a lot of diminished guitar patterns. Glitter was a certain manifestation; it helped amplify the view of it, cause when you're in an arena you want to see something from a distance, so you had to enhance the arena show. All the arena rock bands of the early 70s were primarily metal bands. When Bowie emerged in Spiders, that was a metal band back then. They were one of the first to understand the psychology of arena rock and develop it. You find little bits and pieces of everything in our music, your Sabbath-AC/DC-Alice viewpoint, predominantly, along with our own warped viewpoint. It's intense, it's superheavy and it gets people climbing off the walls. ■

OPEN EARS

PHRASING

by Steve Morse



John Stix

One of the most celebrated guitarists in the world, Steve Morse is the former leader of the Dregs. He currently leads the Steve Morse Band and farms his own land in Georgia.

I recently had the occasion to jam with Rick Derringer on *Rock and Roll Hoochie Koo.* Rick was playing some rock guitar that was real musical and melodic. It got me thinking about writing a column on phrasing. I think it was Wes Montgomery who said that a solo should be as beautiful or as memorable as the melody. The point is that phrasing can be both musical and full of energy.

There are many different ways of phrasing and no one way is the right way. Dire Straits' guitarist Mark Knopfler is famous for his economical phrasing, as is David Gilmour, Billy Gibbons, Eric Clapton and Jeff Beck; Allan Holdsworth and Eddie Van Halen are known for fluid continuous phrasings. Joe Walsh has the textbook style of easy-to-understand phrasing. Also, Pat Metheny, Carlos Santana, Dickie Betts, Larry Carlton and Albert Lee are just a few of the guitar greats who spring to mind when I think of players with unique phrasing and signature sounds. Robert Plant does little vocal improvs that would be textbook perfect for guitar. His adlibs are like little solos with very logical phrasing.

The point is that one of the things you can do to strengthen your soloing ability is to add new ideas to your phrasing. Listen to Eddie Van Halen on the **Star Fleet** album. I couldn't believe it was the same guy. He wasn't minimal in his notes but he was definitely dividing up his phrasing. It was certainly different from what he is known for.

One of the first things you can do is to add a little breathing room. Singers and horn players do this because they have to. It's a natural thing that we're used to hearing in all forms of music, since singing or chanting was our first form of music. On guitar you don't always have to stop in order to take a breath. Breathing room between phrases can be a long note with vibrato, a slide, a rest or playing a chord.

The most obvious thing for me is to break something up into pieces. For instance, take one phrase every two bars. That seems like a simple idea, but I've sat with people and tried to get them to do that. It's hard to get somebody out of the habit of playing continuously with absolutely no thought about phrasing. This simple thing will force a lot of people to look at music as little sentences put together. A personal example of this would be my slide guitar solo on *Twiggs Approved.* It's not that this in itself will make your solo more musical but it will go a long way towards making it more listenable, and will help you think in terms of dividing sections into phrases.

Another thing is to try making the first and third phrases have something similar about them. It can be rhythmic or perhaps a melodic variation. It's actually a songwriting technique, but it works well for solos because the best kind of solo is one that is musically valid aside from being a bunch of hot licks. Having phrases one and three related is just like rhyming a poem or a song. The fade out on *Life's Been Good,* by Joe Walsh, is a good example of this.

In fact, something I found that makes instant improvement in my phrasing, is if I start thinking of my solo as lines in a song. Singing what you play will force you to breathe eventually. The obvious example is George Benson. He does it on mike as a performance thing, but his stuff certainly flows. It's a kind of time-honored jazz tradition to sing along, and as a result it may have negative connotations to some rock players. But I've seen a lot of rock players do it. I sort of moan and groan along with what I play. I play so loud I don't have to be in tune with what I'm playing. But I do breathe exactly the way I play.

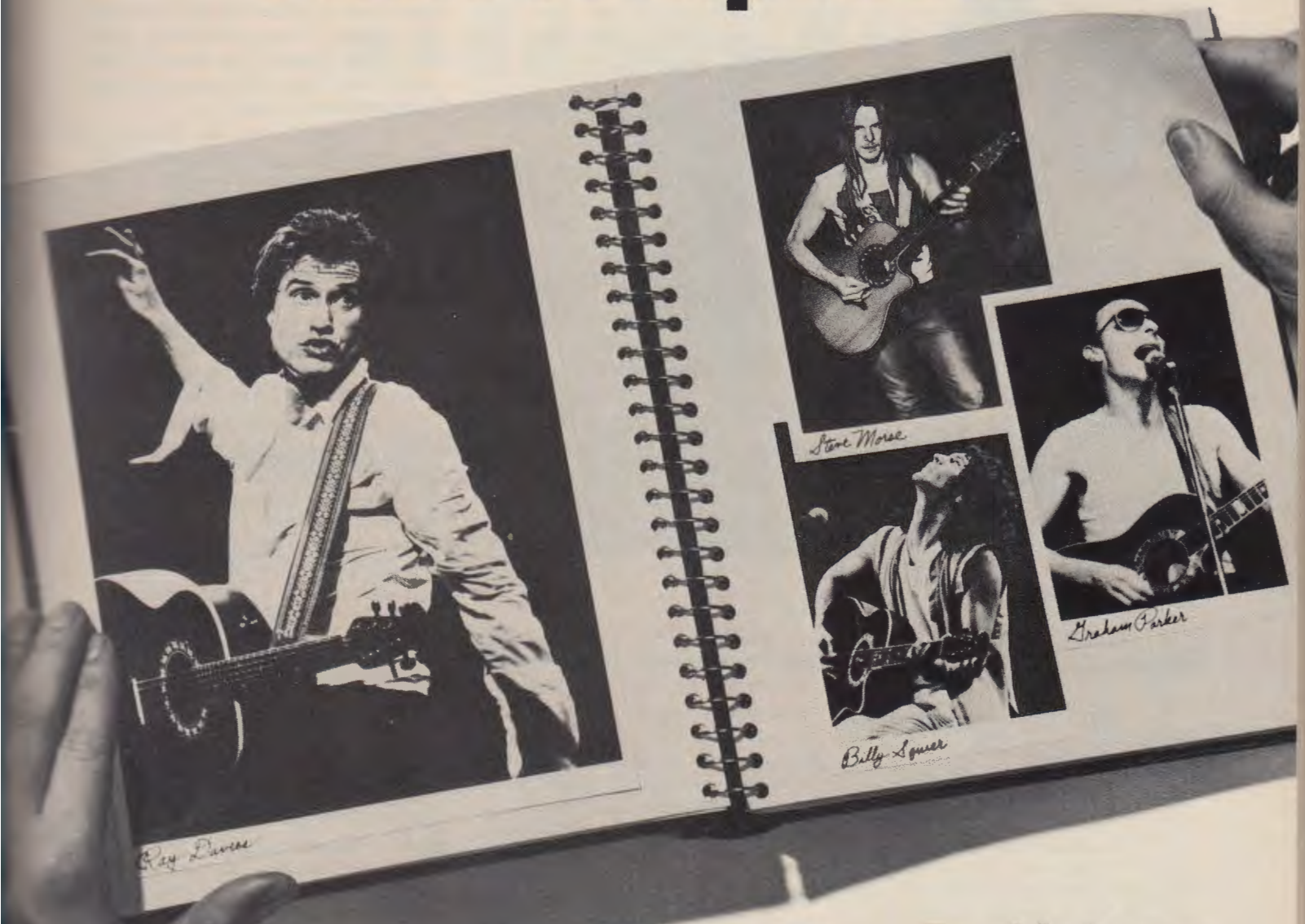
Another thing is to try putting some elements of the tune's melody in your solo. The Beatles are a good example for this one. Many of their solos were almost exactly the melody. On the Dregs tune *What If,* I find it easy to incorporate the melody into the solo when I play it live. It's just nice to start with a hint of the melody and take it from there.

Why not try to make your phrases go in different directions? Many people tend to play mostly in one direction. For me it's always easier to end on a high note. But if your solo always goes from high notes to low ones, try reversing it and vice versa.

Phrasing can also be hidden in a complex run with many notes. You don't always have to play slow or "tasty" to have good phrasing. You can punctuate continuous notes with bends, anticipated notes or accents. For example, by accenting key notes you can make a simple and logical melody. I did that at the end of *The Bash.* I'm playing constant 16th notes but the top note is forming a simple melody to fit over the chords.

All of these ideas are exercises to try while you're practicing. When you actually play you don't think about any of this. I have to make this point clear because some people believe that when I'm playing I'm thinking about these rules and ideas. All I'm doing is playing by instinct. It's the old phrase I used to hear a lot at school. "You've got to learn all this stuff so you can forget it later and just play." ■

Ovation's rock scrapbook.



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on Songwriting

KERRY LIVGREN

Dave Hope Rich Williams John Elefante Phil Ehart Kerry Livgren

Interview by Bruce Pollock

Long before Kansas, Kerry Livgren was in a group named Kansas, an experimental rock group of the 60s, a cross between Frank Zappa and King Crimson, with horns. The songwriter of the group, Livgren maintains it was a terrific training ground. "I wrote bizarre poetry," he says, "not unlike Kansas, but weirder." When the second coming of Kansas was at hand—and Don Kirschner with his checkbook at the ready—Livgren was more than willing to grant the world a few concessions—in return for a few favors. "Having done strange music for several years, we got a little tired of eating rice," he says. "I realized I'd have to make my stuff a little more approachable."

After writing two of the rock world's certified classics, *Dust in the Wind* and *Carry on Wayward Son*, the 80s finds Kerry older and wiser, but still creating. "I was very idealistic back then. I still am, but I've learned to temper that with a certain amount of reality."

Before Kansas got signed you could sum up everything I'd written in two words: I'm searching. But from that point on you could sum it all up by saying—I've found. What changed was my world view. I went from one of basically a kind of existential despair to one of joy and peace. I write about God almost exclusively at this point—basically it's always been that way. And when that's the subject, by definition, there are no limits to what you can say. If you look at my lyrics, even *Dust in the Wind* is a song about the transitory nature of our physical lives. That falls under the umbrella heading of God. If you find something fulfilling then you want to communicate it to other people. What could you write about, ultimately, that could be more interesting?

MATURITY

At this point in my life I tend to write when I have to more than when I just want to. It used to be the other way around. I used to write just for the sheer joy of writing. Now there are so many other considerations, other things that take up time in my life, that I have to allot the time. It's a discipline. You have to sit down and say, I'm going to write. When you do that, sometimes inspiration comes, sometimes it doesn't. Then there are times I wake up at three in the morning and there's a completed song playing in my head. I run down to the piano and I record it and then go back to bed.

I wrote *Dust in the Wind* as a finger-picking exercise originally. My wife was listening to me play it one day and she said, 'You know, that's really pretty, you should make a song out of that.' I didn't think it was a Kansas-type song. She said, 'give it a try anyway.' Several million records later, I guess she was right. Musically, though, it's not one of my favorite songs. I tend to like the more bombastic things, like *The Wall*.

The change in the spontaneity of my writing, I find, has to do with just being older and more seasoned. There's something about first entering the maturity of life that has a sort of urgency about it. Not that it shouldn't be there all the time. It's just that now I have to work at it more. It's not so spontaneous. But I'm writing some things now that are much better than what I wrote back then.

APPLAUSE

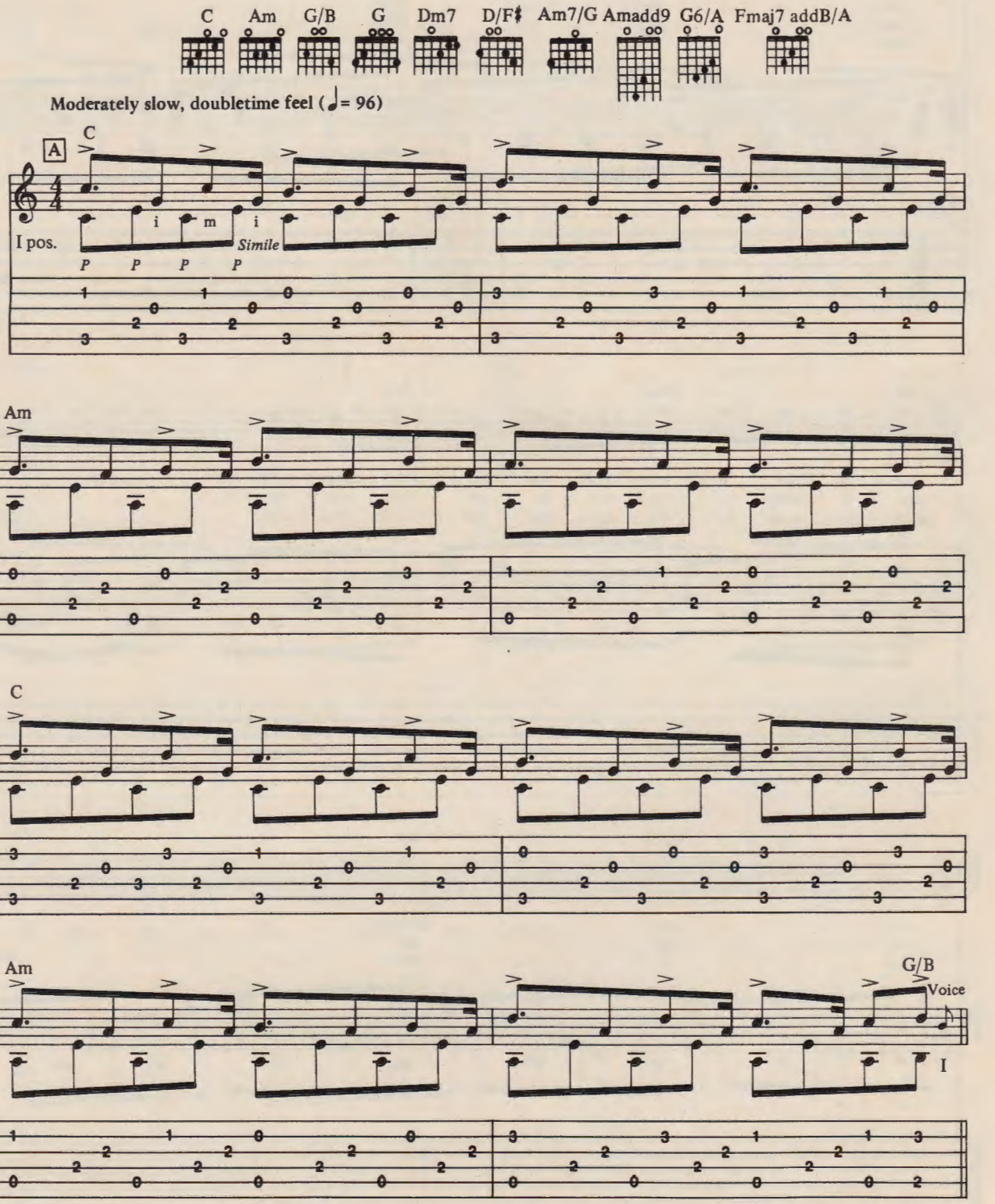
To me a song's value is not determined on an applause meter. I personally would play a song that I believed in even if the crowd hated it. I'm probably the only one in the band who feels that way. When I go to a concert I don't measure my enthusiasm for the group by how much I jump up and down and yell and scream. I tend to sit there and analyze something on a level that isn't manifested in loud applause and gyrations. There's a level on which you can appreciate things and even be so blown away that you can't even move. If you were judging how much the audience liked the band only from the volume of the applause, you'd get a completely wrong picture of what was actually happening. You might think the song didn't go over. I think with certain songs we play, the object is to just leave people with their mouths open. ■

DUST IN THE WIND

As recorded by Kansas

(From the album POINT OF KNOW RETURN/Kirshner JZ 34939)

Words and Music by
Kerry Livgren



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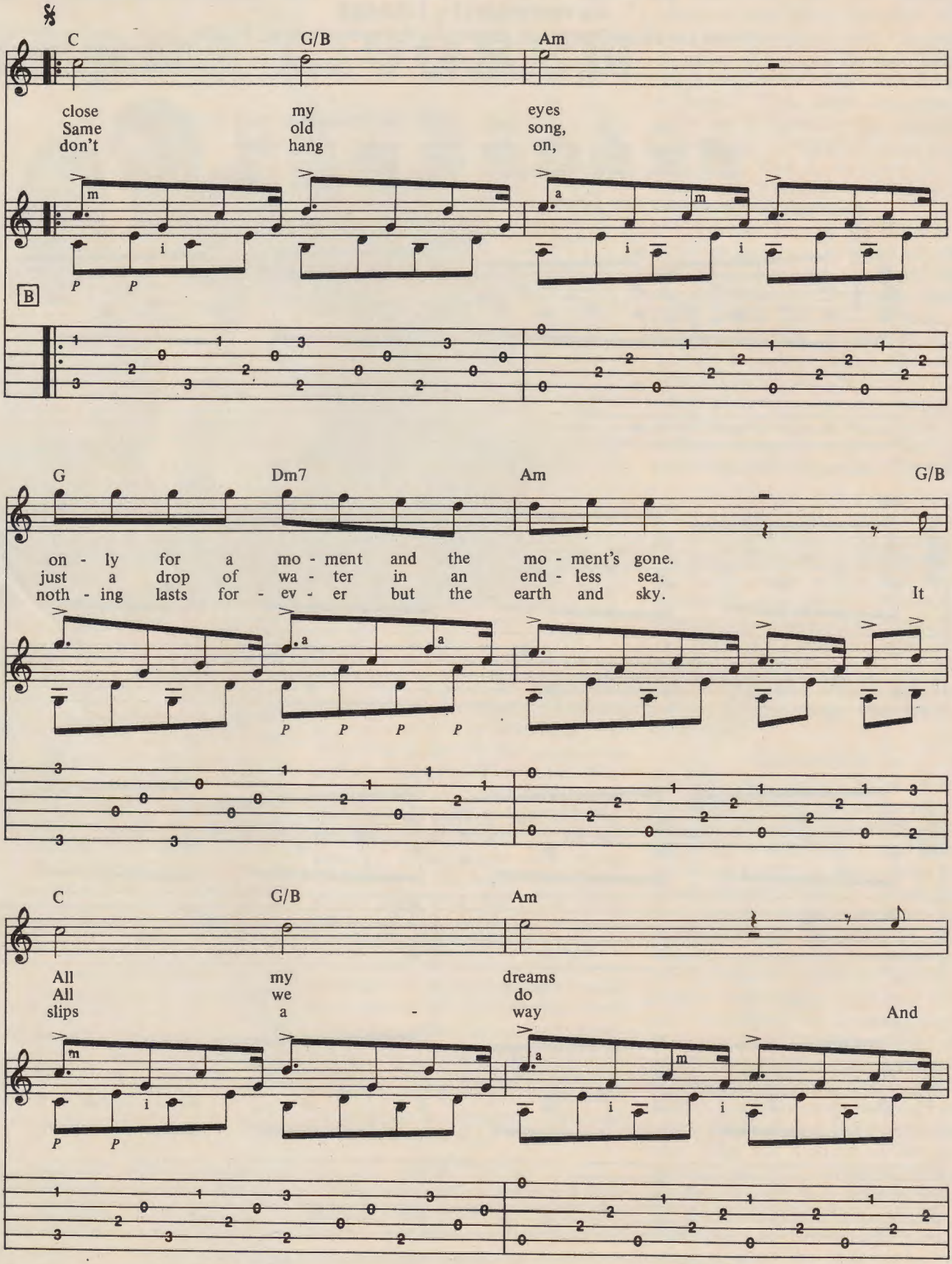
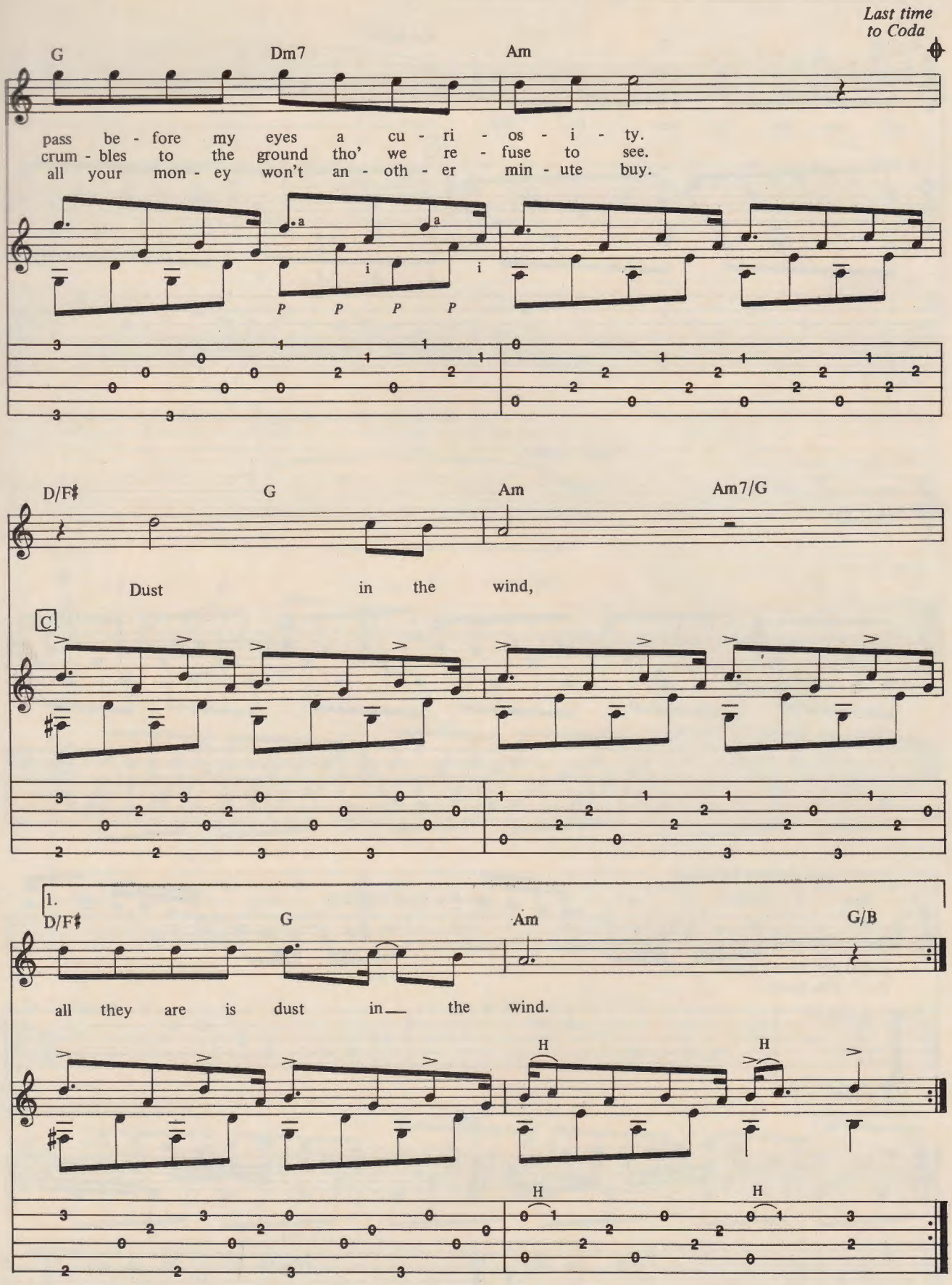
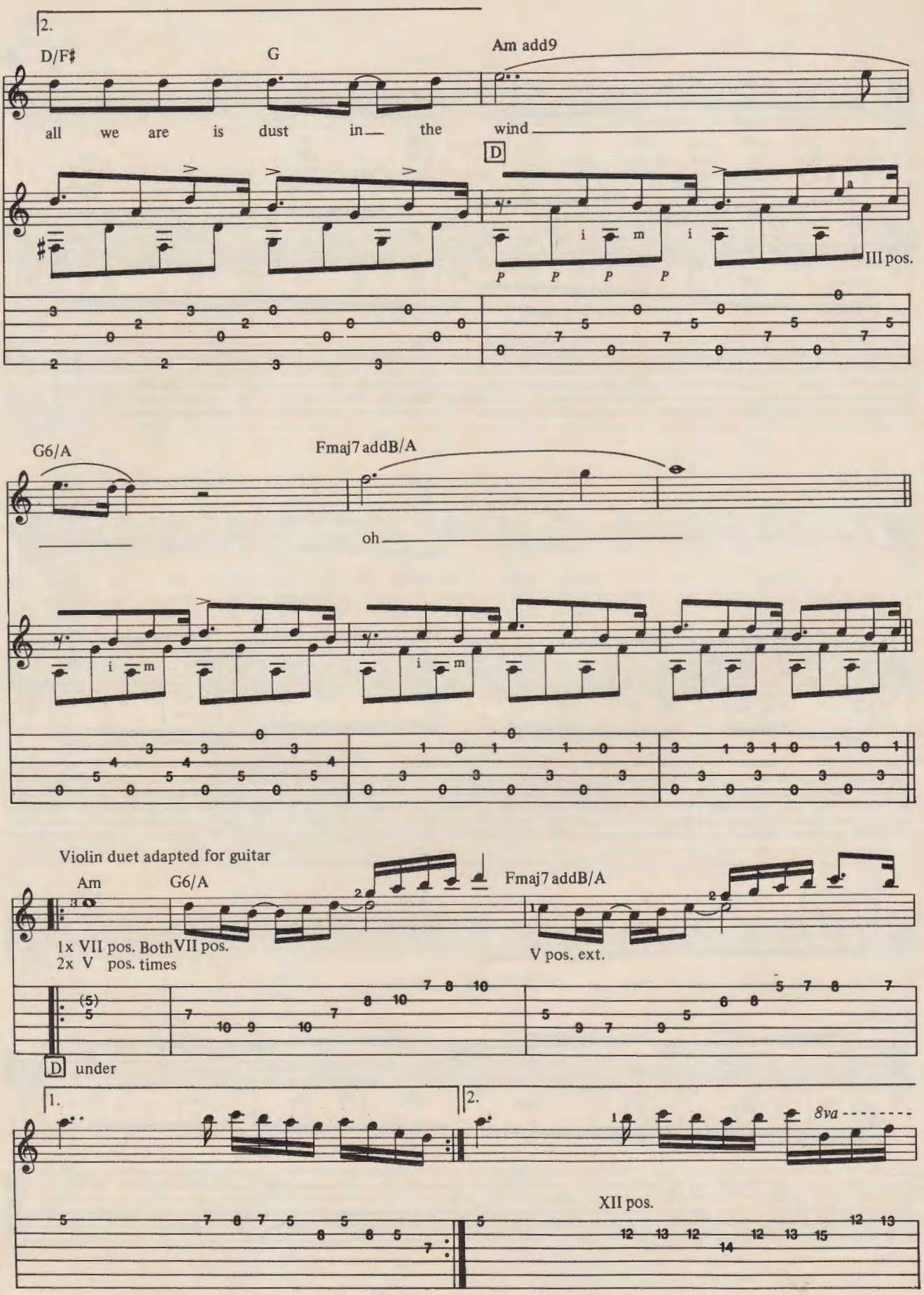
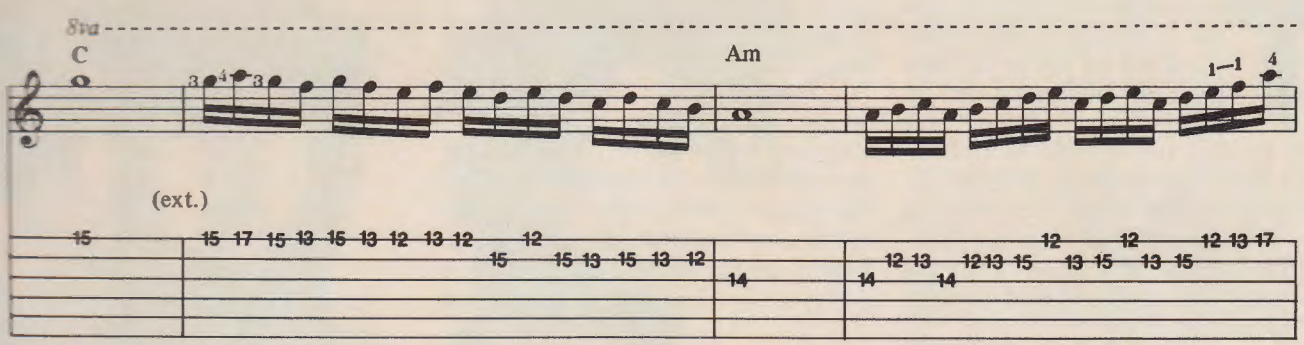
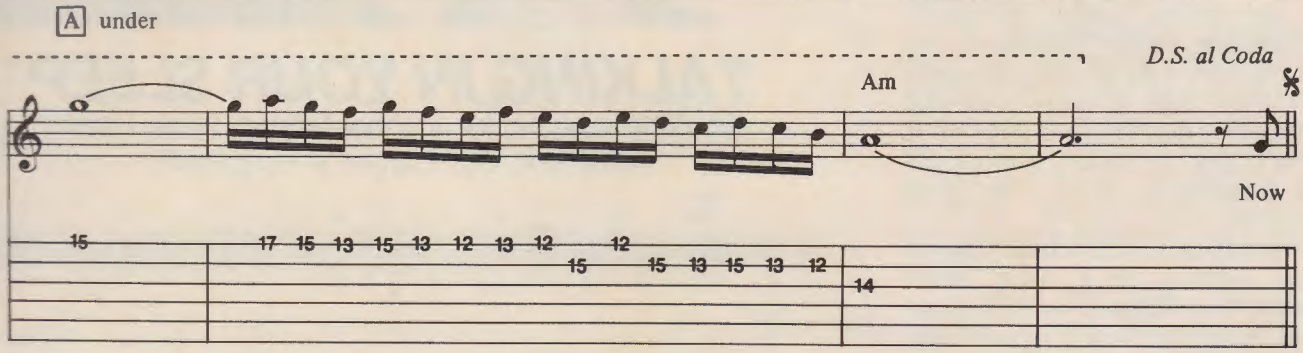
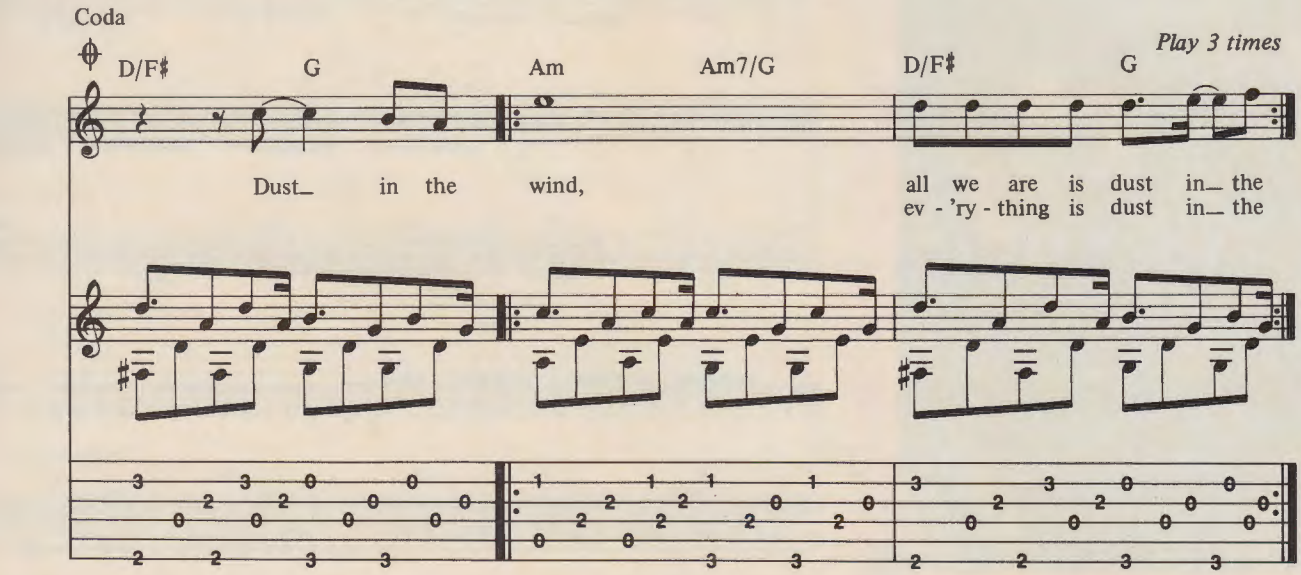

C G/B Am
close my eyes
Same old song,
don't hang on,
B
G Dm7 Am G/B
on - ly for a mo - ment and the mo - ment's gone.
just a drop of wa - ter in an end - less sea.
noth - ing lasts for - ev - er but the earth and sky. It
C G/B Am
All my dreams
All we do
slips a - way And

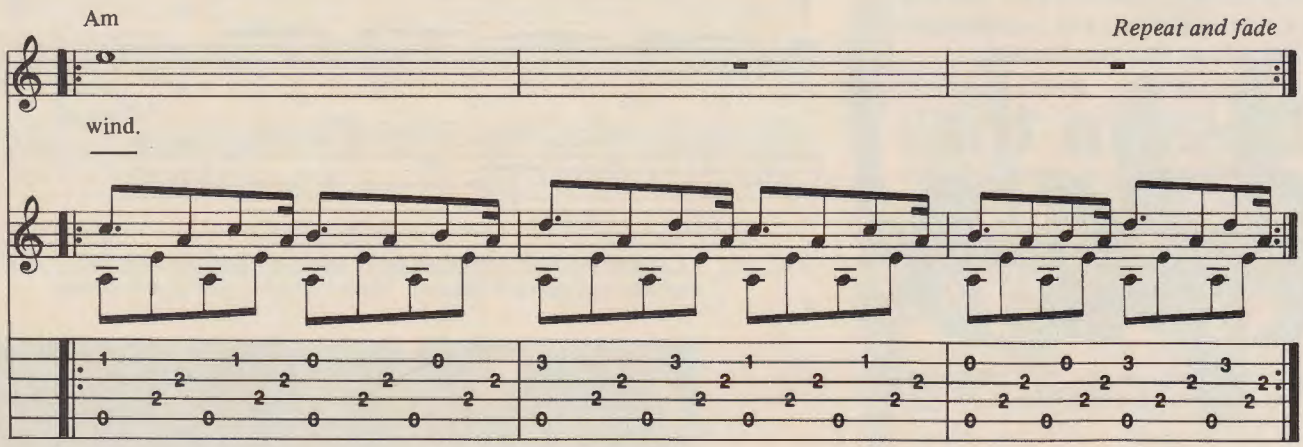

Last time to Coda
G
Dm7
Am
pass be - fore my eyes a cu - ri - os - i - ty.
crum - bles to the ground tho' we re - fuse to see.
all your mon - ey won't an - oth - er min - ute buy.
D/F♯
G
Am
Am7/G
Dust in the wind,
C
1.
D/F♯
G
Am
G/B
all they are is dust in the wind.
H
H
H
H


2.
D/F♯
G
Am add9
all we are is dust in the wind
D
i m i
P P P P
III pos.
G6/A
Fmaj7 addB/A
oh
i m
i m
Violin duet adapted for guitar
Am
G6/A
Fmaj7 addB/A
1x VII pos. Both VII pos.
2x V pos. times
V pos. ext.
D under
1.
2.
8va
XII pos.


8va
C
Am
(ext.)


A under
D.S. al Coda
Am
Now


Coda
D/F♯
G
Am
Am7/G
D/F♯
G
Play 3 times
Dust in the wind,
all we are is dust in the
ev - 'ry - thing is dust in the


Am
Repeat and fade
wind.

The almighty eighth note was the common denominator for some of the great bass lines of the last year. It seems like everyone has been getting away from the quarter note feel and hearing rhythms in terms of eighth notes. The Police's *Every Breath You Take,* Michael Jackson's *Billie Jean,* McCartney's *Say Say Say,* and Def Leppard's *Photograph* all follow the mold.

My favorite to date has got to be this gem by the Romantics. I've just completed an around-the-world-in-90-days Hall & Oates tour and no matter what club we went to or radio station we visited, this record was happening. Why? The great bass line!

Looking at the chart, there's really nothing to it. Each chord change is anticipated on the upbeat ("anacrusis") of beat 4 in each bar, giving it the funk. This anticipation

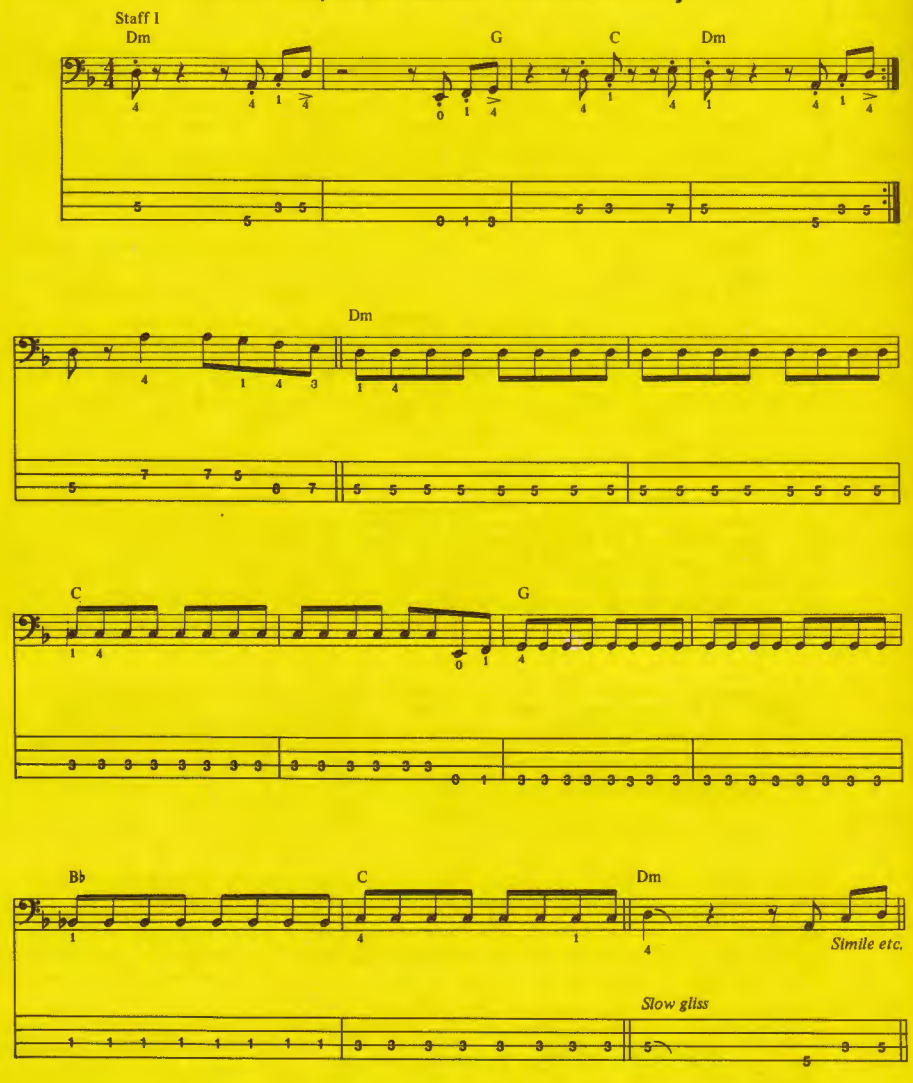
Tom "T-Bone" Wolk is the performing and recording bass player for Hall & Oates. His book, ROCK RIFFS FOR BASS, *is available from the Amsco Music Publishing Company.*

Bass in the 80s

by Tom "T-Bone" Wolk

TALKING IN YOUR SLEEP

Words and Music by Jimmy Marinos, Wally Palmer, Mike Skill, Coz Canler & Pete Solley



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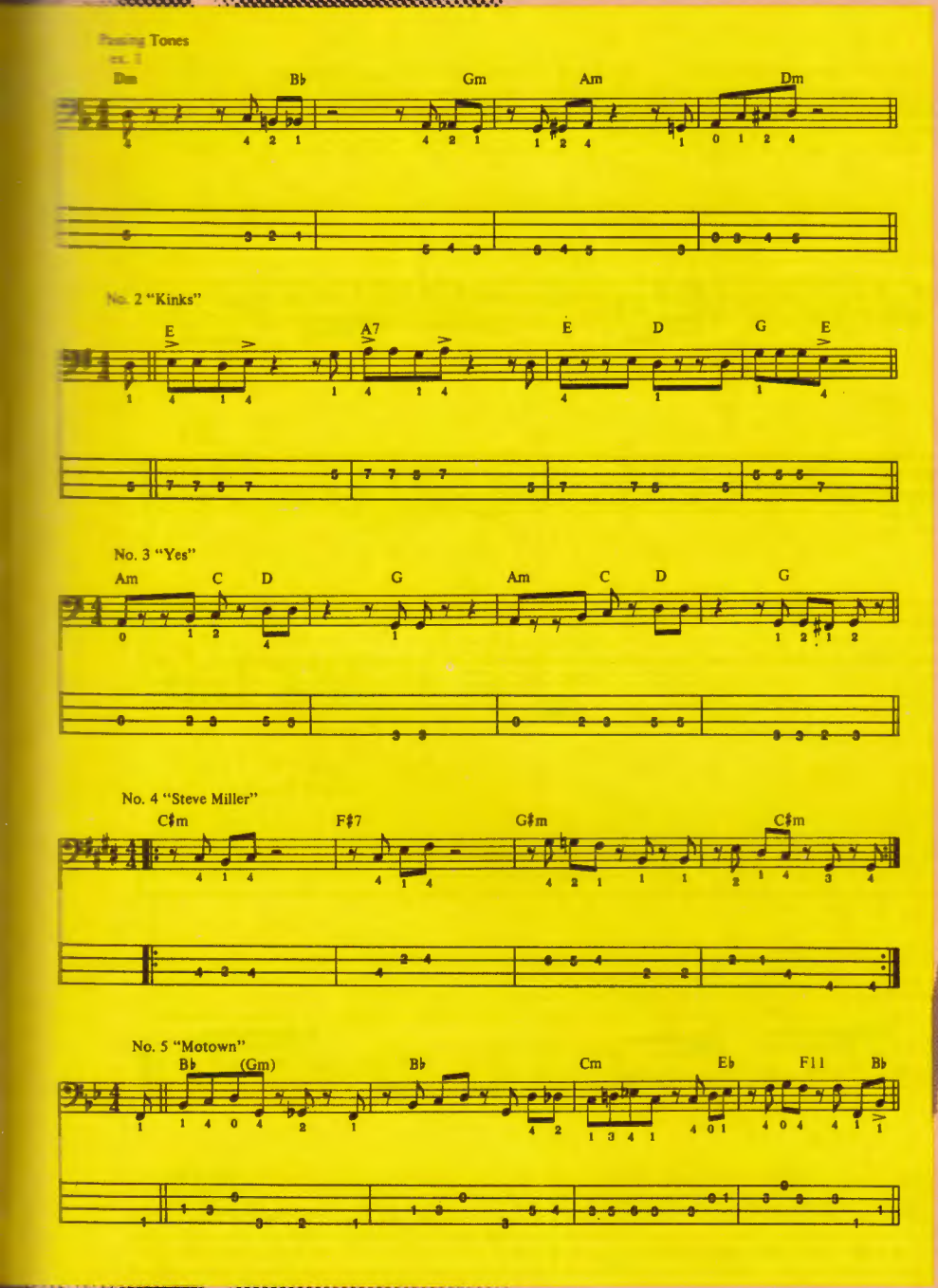
is balanced out by the bass drum playing the downbeats of each bar, otherwise the rhythm section would sound lopsided.

The turnaround in the second ending sets up the bridge, straight-ahead eighth notes, which takes you back to the chorus. But check out the slow "drag" off the D note every four bars, giving the chorus a little edge.



The whole chart can be played easily with a pick. Muting the strings with your picking hand helps achieve the punchy, staccato effect. Sounds to me like the chorus was doubled with a Stratocaster and a synthesizer, giving the overall bass sound a good high end chick, and a little envelope "wow" to round it out. See staff 1.

Let's try to apply this record's attitude to some other chord changes you might encounter, using various groupings of eighth notes.

A common chord change you hear over and over is I minor to flat VI (*i.e.* Dm to B♭). To construct a Romantics-type bass line try using passing tones. From Dm to B♭ use C and B; between B♭ and Gm use A and A♭; between A and G use G♯ and going from D to C use C♯. See example 1.

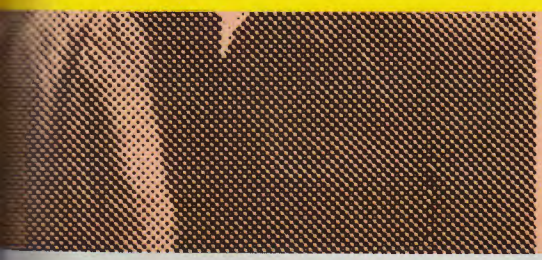
Using the same Romantics groove, but with the emphasis in the first two beats of each bar, here's a riff that sounds like something the Kinks did in 1965. See example 2.

Anticipating the chord change once again by playing the change on the eighth note early (on the upbeat of beat 4, as opposed to the downbeat of bar 2) is a device that goes a long way. Chris Squire of Yes used it recently in *Owner of a Lonely Heart*. See example 3.

Another trick is to leave an eighth note rest *before* starting your riff. Sometimes more impact is achieved by creating a space. Steve Miller did something similar on *Abracadabra*. Note that we're still dealing with groupings of three eighth notes. In the second bar, start the riff on the fifth of F♯7. Watch those upbeats in bars 3 and 4. Notice that the bass line is real hooky and you didn't play one downbeat! So don't be afraid to twist your brain a little bit. See example 4.

Just to show you these didn't start yesterday, here's one that's reminiscent of the great Motown group, the Four Tops, and the masterful bass playing of James Jamerson. Notice the eighth note groupings, some passing tones in bars 1 and 2 and some chord change anticipation in bars 3 and 4. See example 5.

Well there it is, your ticket to a contemporary classic pop-rock bass line, the almighty eighth note. Keep rockin' and I'll see you on MTV. ■



Tablature Explanation see pg. 92

Bass Line for

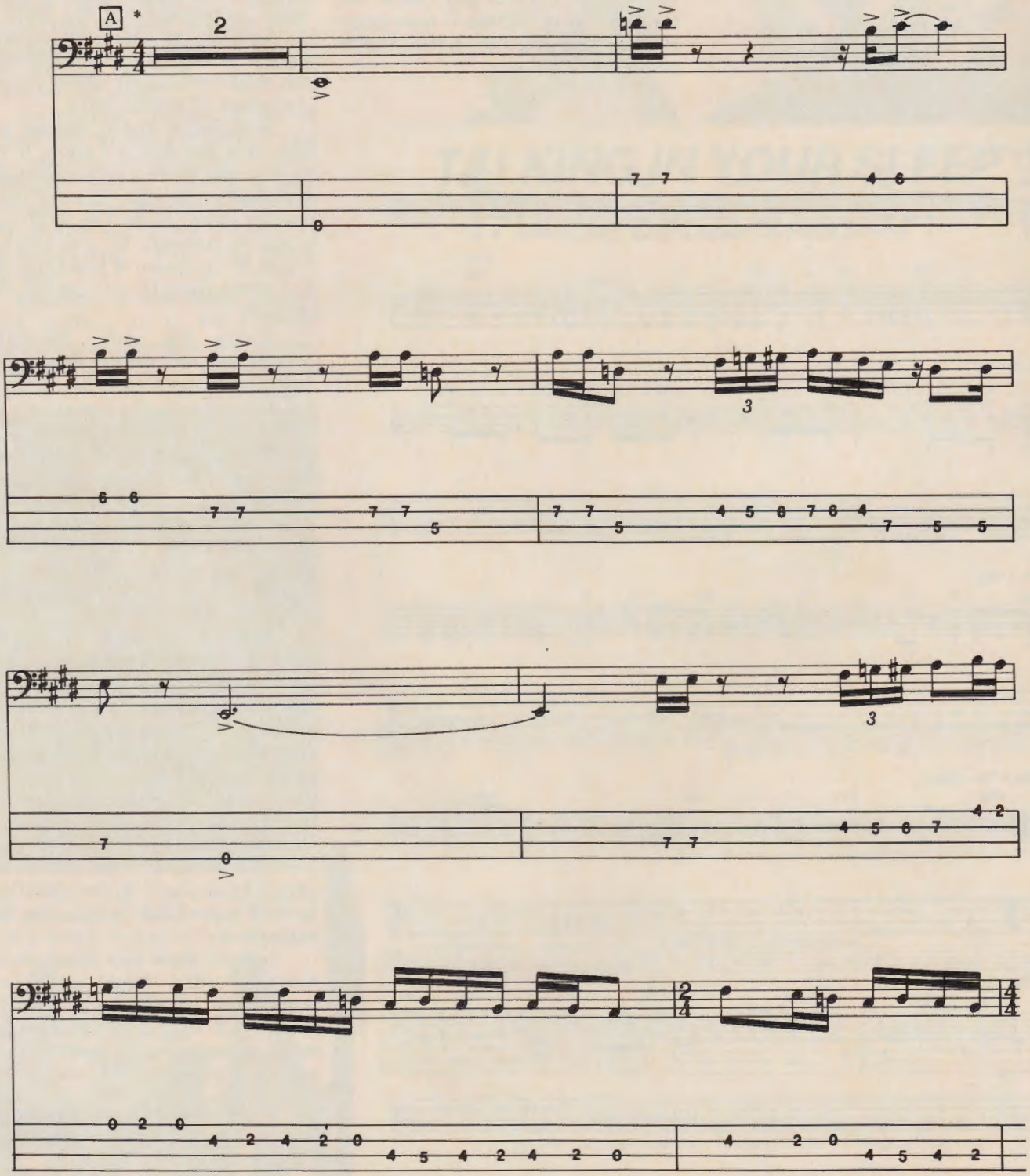
THE SPIRIT OF RADIO

As recorded by Rush

(From the album PERMANENT WAVES/Mercury SRM 1-4001

Words by Geddy Lee and Alex Lifeson

Music by Neal Peart



*Boxed letters correspond to analogous places in guitar vocal arrangement, p.52.

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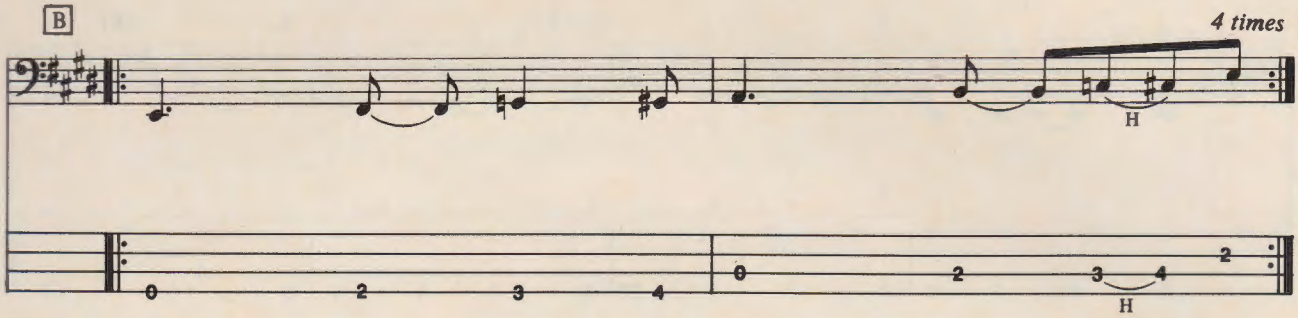
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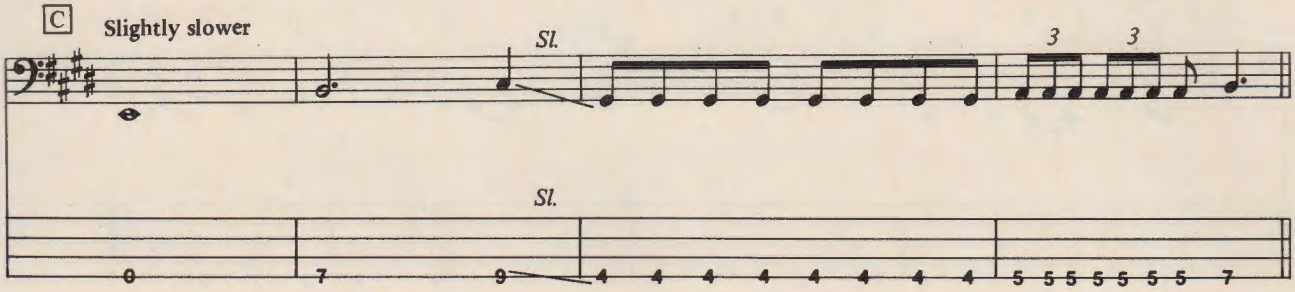
4 times
H
H


C
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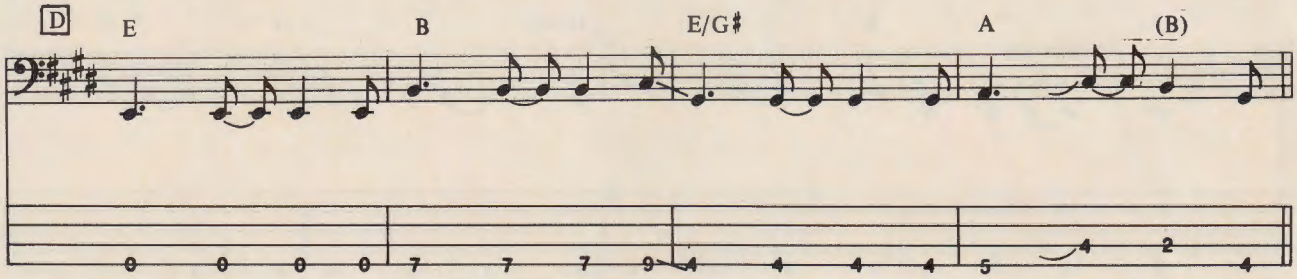
Sl.
3
3
Sl.


D
E
B
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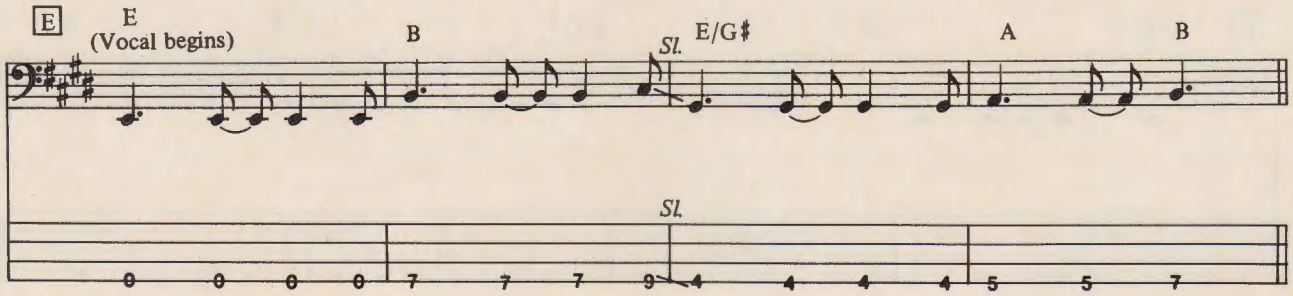
(B)


E
E
(Vocal begins)
B
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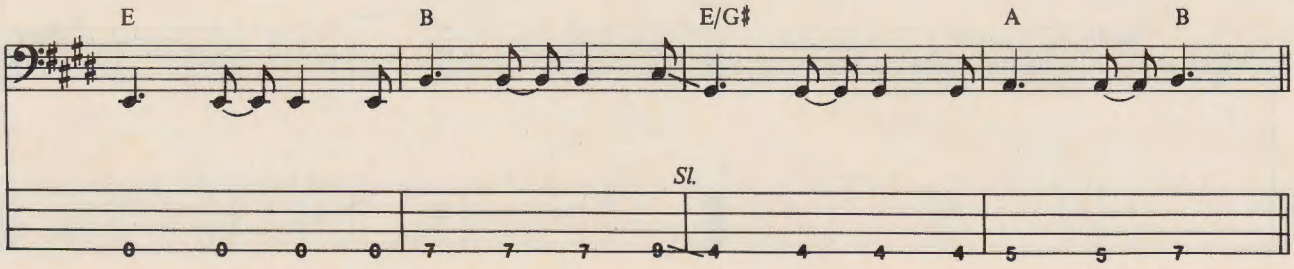
E/G♯
A
B
Sl.


E
B
E/G♯
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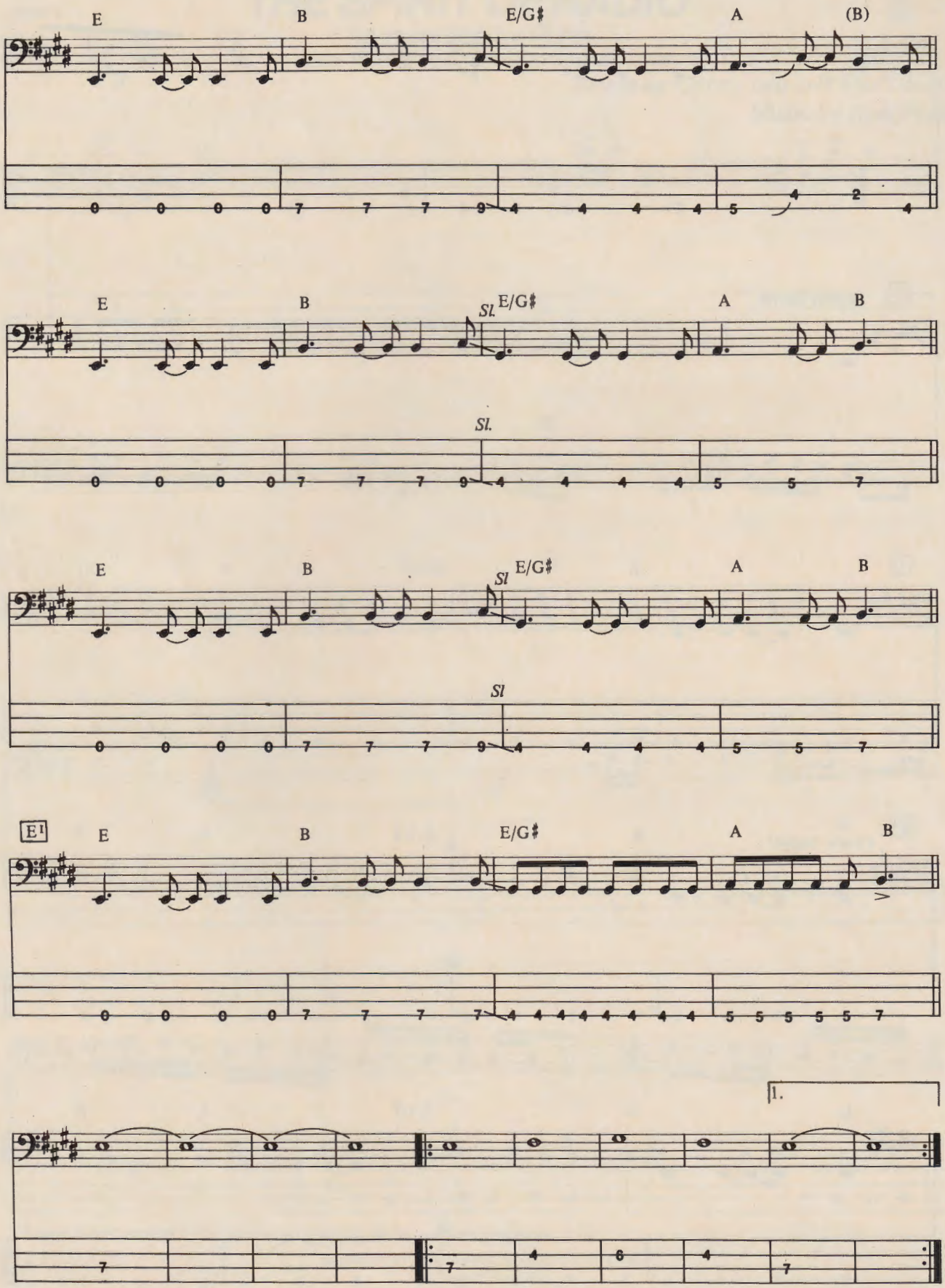
B
Sl.


E
B
E/G♯
A
(B)
Sl.
E/G♯
A
B
Sl.
Sl
E/G♯
A
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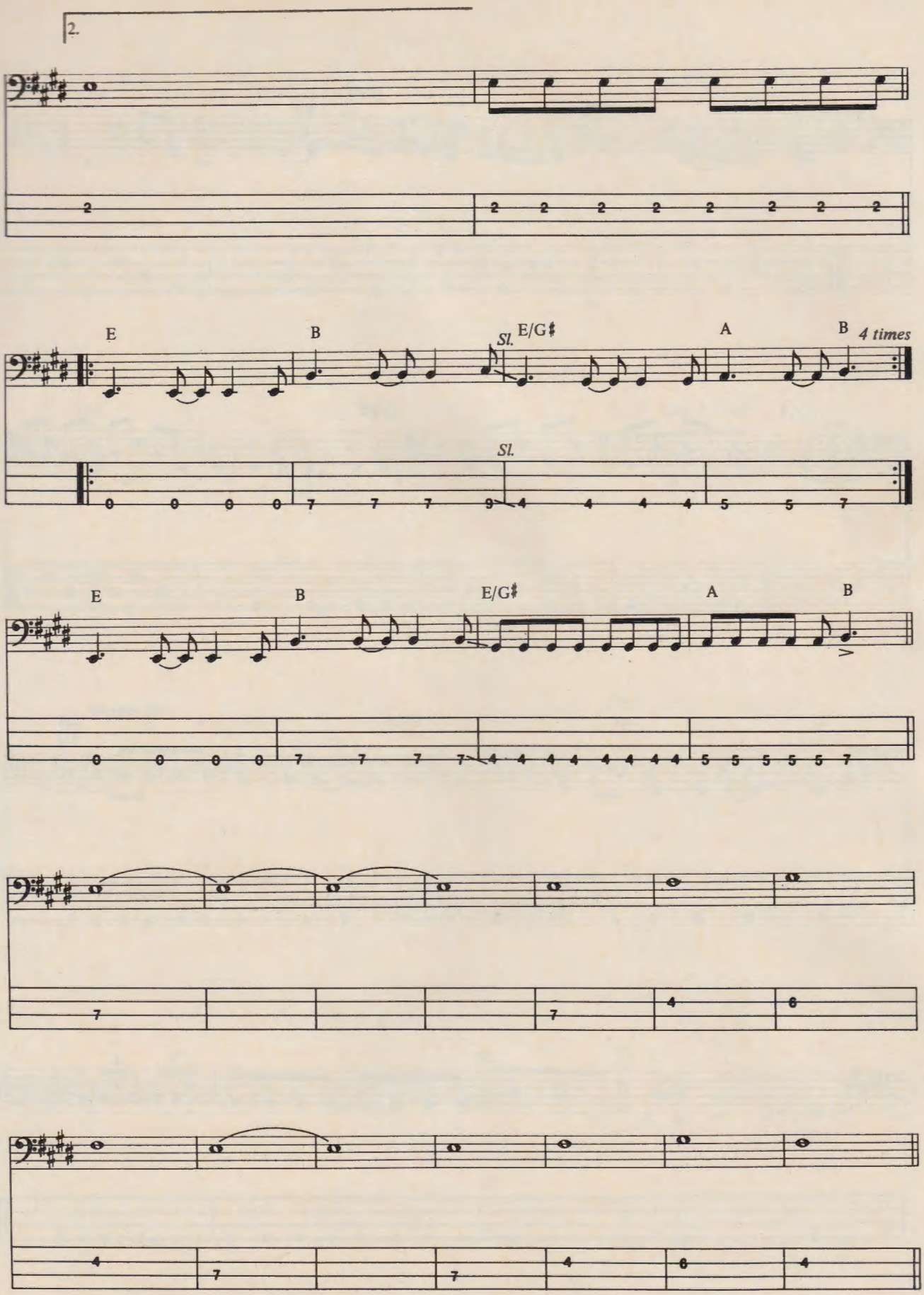
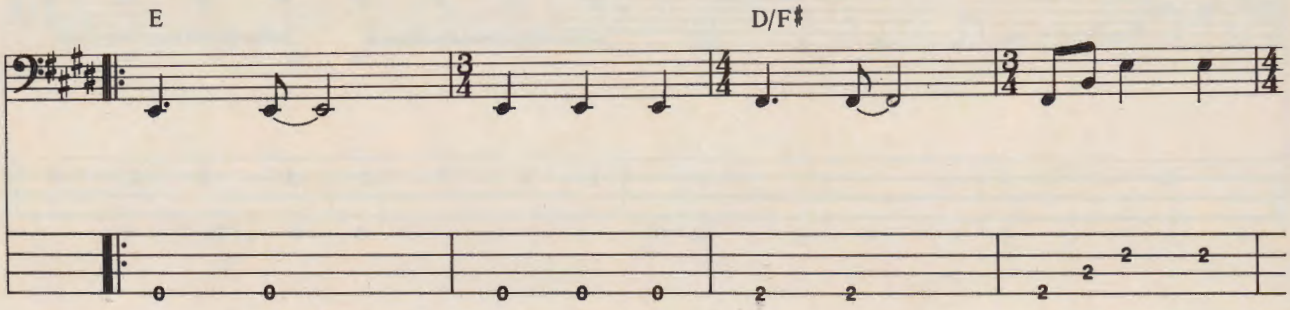
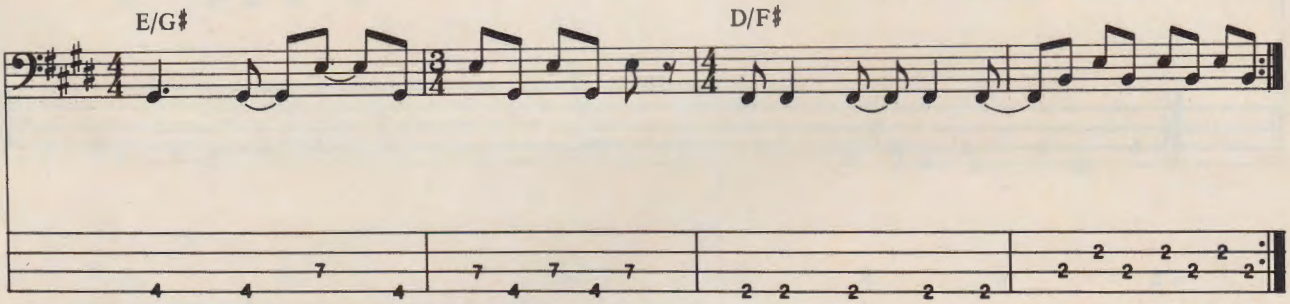
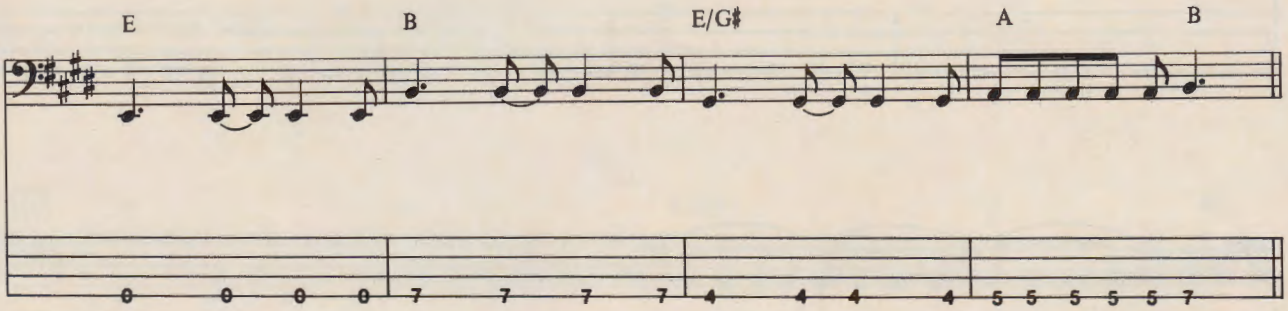
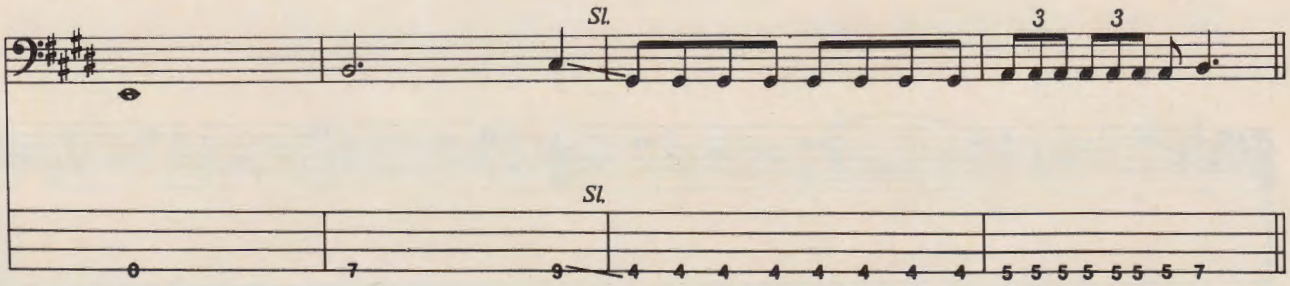
Sl
E¹
E
B
E/G♯
A
B
1.

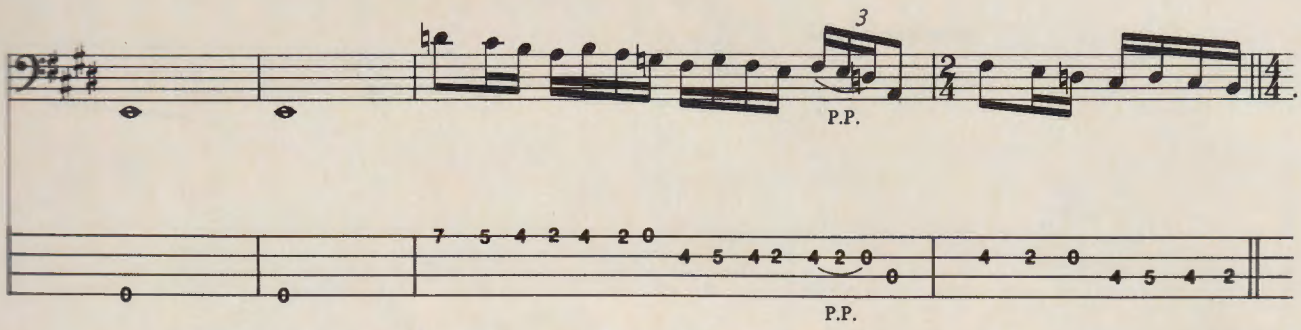

2.
E
B
Sl.
E/G♯
A
B
4 times
Sl.
E
B
E/G♯
A
B

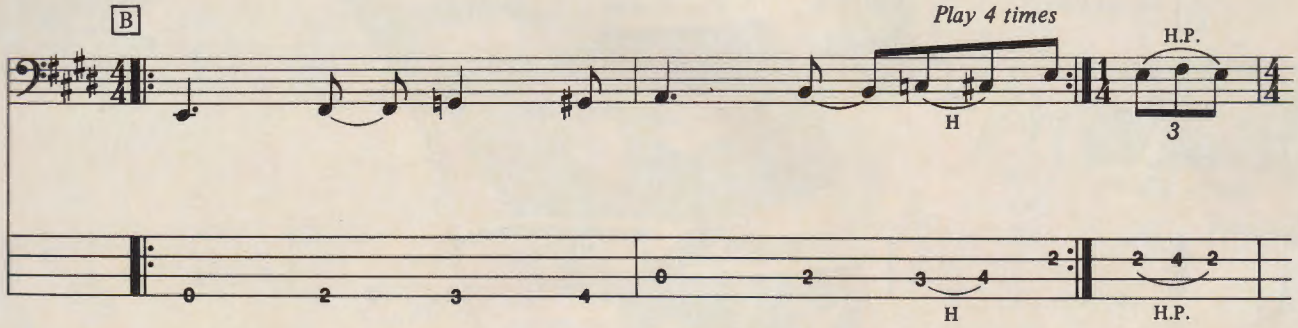

E
D/F♯

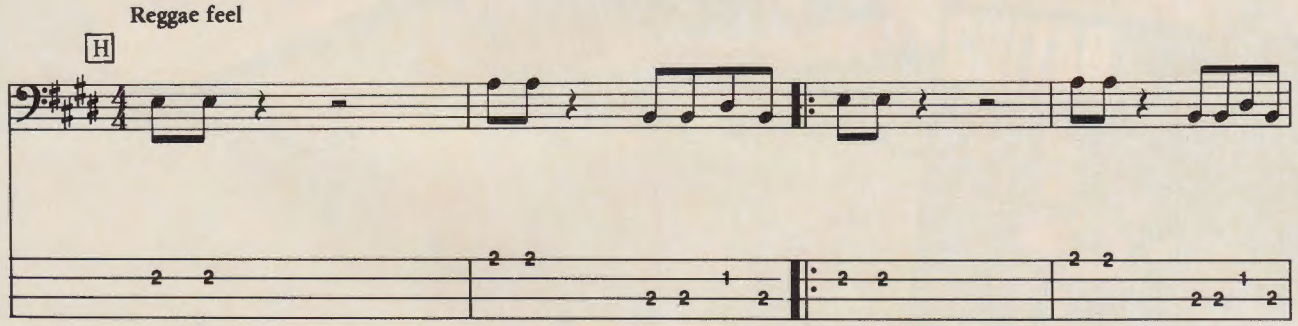

E/G♯
D/F♯

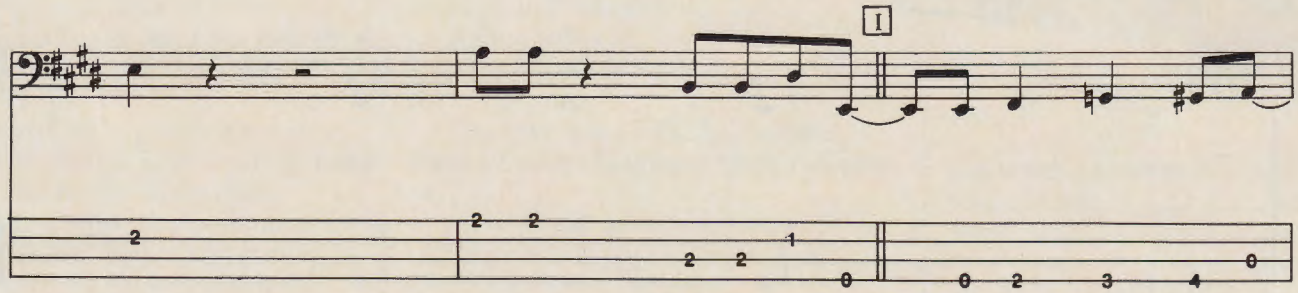

E
B
E/G♯
A
B

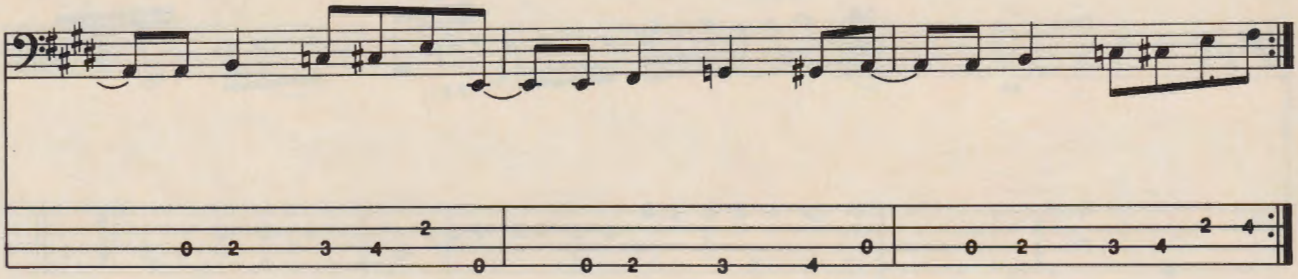

Sl.
3
3
Sl.

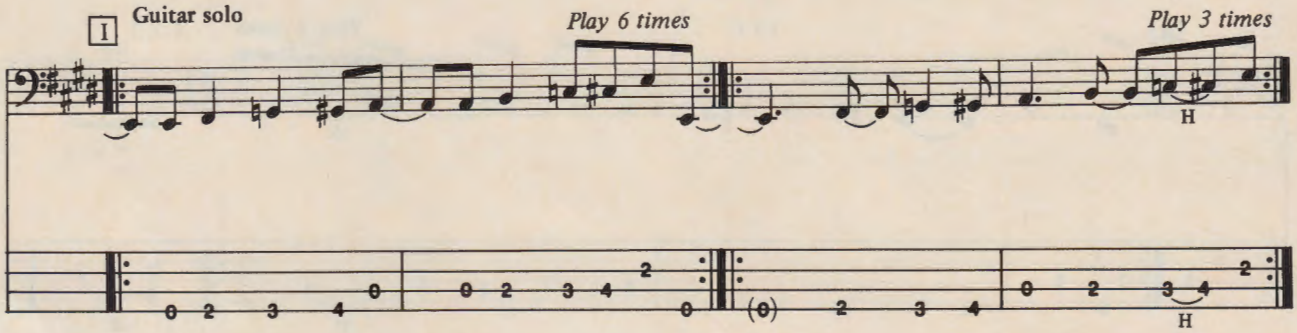

3
P.P.
P.P.

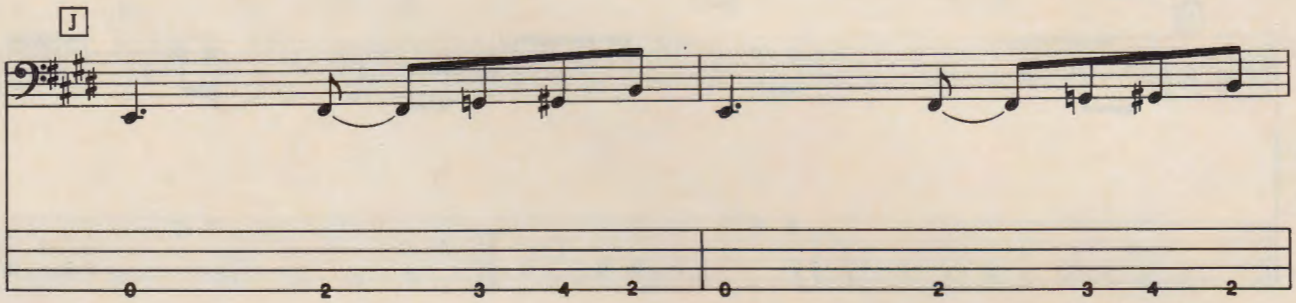

B
Play 4 times
H.P.
H
3
H
H.P.

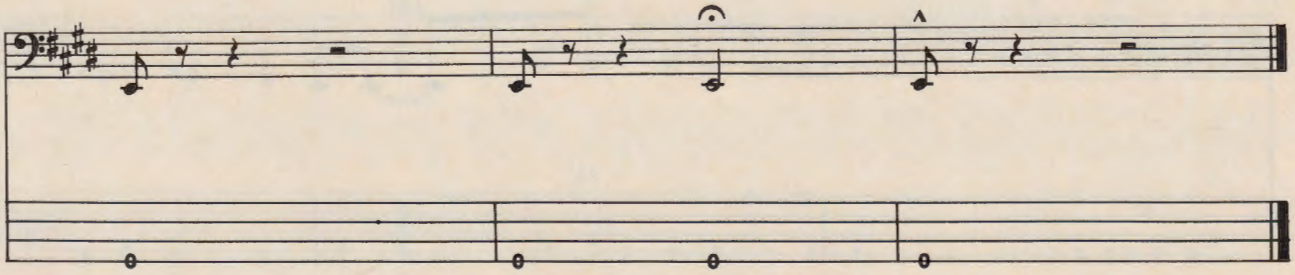

Reggae feel
H


I




I
Guitar solo
Play 6 times
Play 3 times
H
H


J



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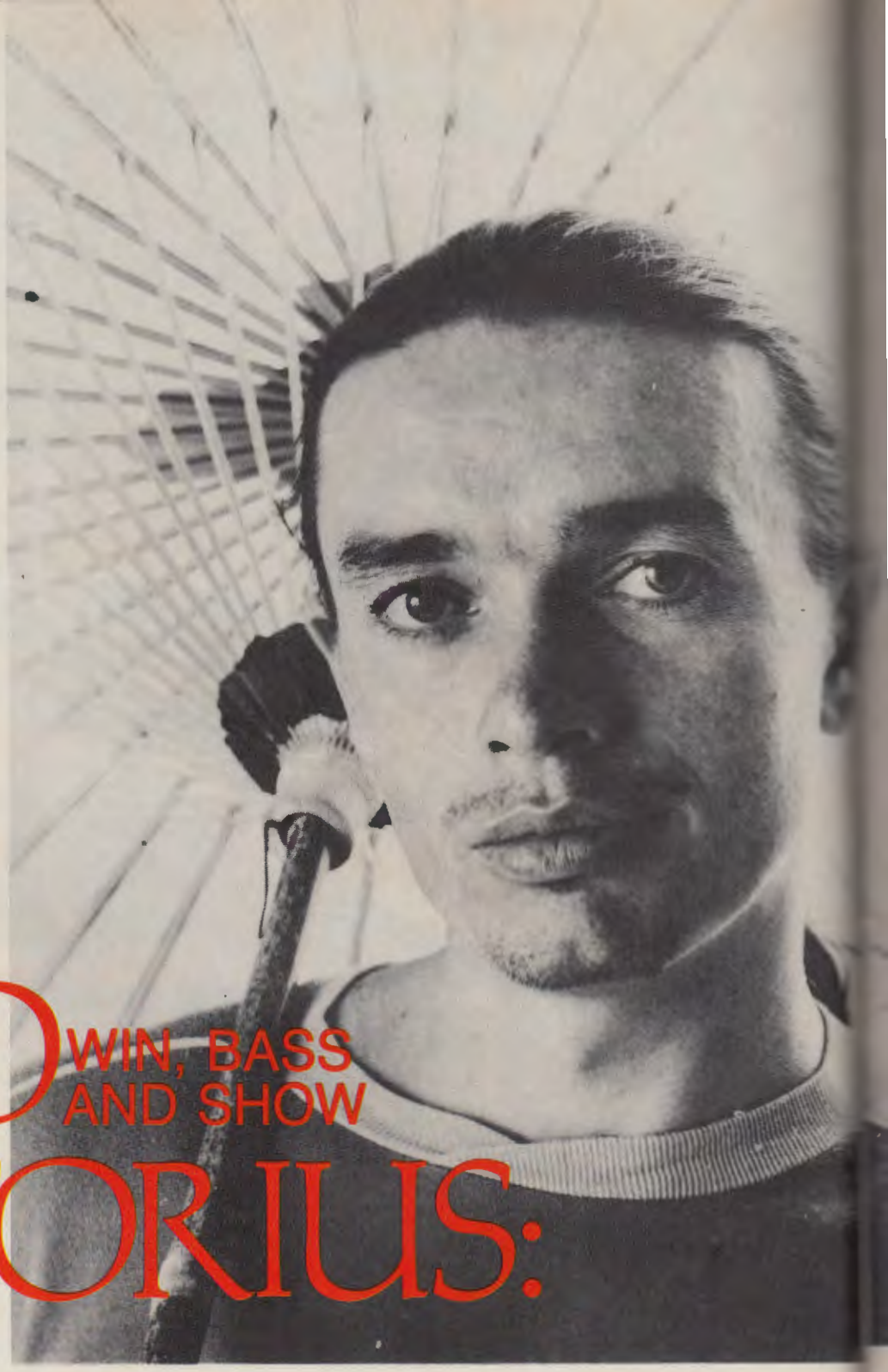
Jaco Pastorius is a bass player who has put *America the Beautiful,* Bach's *Chromatic Fantasy* and James Brown's *The Chicken* all on the same record. In the school of serious musicians, he is the class clown. With a taste that has taken him from Wayne Cochran to Weather Report to Joni Mitchell, Jaco has reinvented both the sound and the role of the electric bass. Beyond the "seriousness" of his accomplishments, he has embued everything he's done with a sense of fun. He is the premier jazz soloist on his instrument, who struts the stage like a video of *The Curly Shuffle.* In the same solo he is apt to quote Charlie Parker, Jimi Hendrix and *The Sound of Music.*

Jaco doesn't generally enjoy giving interviews— to writers. But when he was approached by Kenny Rogers' bass player, Chuck Jacobs, to be part of his book, **The Bottom Line,** he was more than happy to share his thoughts with a fellow musician.



JACO PASTORIUS: WIN, BASS AND SHOW

by Chuck Jacobs

GUITAR: You've been instrumental in changing the role of the electric bass by inventing new sounds and bringing the instrument to the forefront of the tune. How did you come to create these changes?

JACO: It just naturally happened. First of all, I consider myself basically a rhythm 'n' blues bass player and a jazz player. Rhythm 'n' blues and jazz were the gigs that I would play in the clubs when I was a kid. For instance, you took my place in the C.C. Riders Band. (I had the ominous task of trying to fill Jaco's shoes in that band around 1971.) Then there were cocktail piano gigs, maybe a quartet with a saxophone, where I would play upright and Fender bass. So I was always playing more or less what I'm doing now. With regards to being in the forefront, what got me playing the bass like I do was that I never heard very much as far as people playing the bass as a solo instrument. I remember one of the first jazz records that I had when I was real young was this old Max Roach album. All there was, was bass, two horns and Max (on drums). I couldn't even tell what the bass was playing, 'cause the fidelity was bad. Plus it was an old record. So I learned all the horn lines. All of a sudden I was playing *Yardbird Suite* and *Confirmation* when

I was 15, 'cause that's what I figured out.

GUITAR: Was there a time when you first started out playing for others, that your style of playing wasn't accepted?

JACO: Oh all the time . . . (laughs).

GUITAR: Did you ever lose a gig because of your style?

JACO: I remember once I was working at Criteria Studios in Miami and somebody detrimentally said that I was the John McLaughlin of the bass. So that was kind of wild.

GUITAR: What gave you the impetus and desire to keep doing what you were doing?

JACO: Knowing that I was definitely onto something new, and I worked very hard at it. Plus I did work with a lot of people. I went out when I was very young. I seemed to have a real natural talent for it. I also play drums, piano, guitar, flute and sax.

GUITAR: Didn't you work with sax and trumpet virtuoso Ira Sullivan for a while?

JACO: Oh yeah, after I left Cochran's band, I worked with Ira off and on for 'bout two or three years. We were together every night for over a year.

GUITAR: Do you feel that period was a formative time for your playing?

JACO: Definitely, he's one of my biggest influences, one of my best friends. I really enjoy his playing.

GUITAR: What do you feel the primary function of a bass player is in a group?

JACO: Bottom. The stuff that I play, all this virtuoso type stuff, the whole time I'm totally conscious of the bottom. You'll never miss the bottom if you listen to what I'm doing.

GUITAR: Who has the ultimate responsibility for the timekeeping in a group, the bass or the drums?

JACO: I feel that the drums should have more, but I feel that lots of times bass players have to keep the time more because drummers have such rotten time . . . (laughs) sometimes. The really good drummers have great time, but when you're comin' up, drummers lots of times rely on the bass player to lay down the time. I'm usually the timekeeper in any band I've ever been in.

GUITAR: There are various viewpoints as to who should control the group with regards to volume, intensity, etc. Who do you feel should ideally be the control factor in a group?

JACO: Needless to say I feel that everybody in the group has an equal part, but I'll tell you right now that any good bass player should be the leader of any band. Not only with the rhythm, but harmonically you've got control, which the drums can't do. The bass is a very unique and opportunistic place to be. The bass player in my opinion has the time, because that lets the drummers play around you, which is what I've always liked to have, freedom for the drummers.

GUITAR: What do you feel makes your sound unique?

JACO: I was probably the first guy to come out on the scene with a fretless bass, which gives that singing sound. I've been doin' it longer than other people, so maybe maturity makes a difference. And it's definitely in my hands, there's no special electric things I use to get my sound. I just use a regular old Fender Jazz Bass.

GUITAR: When you play in the studio do you plug the bass directly into the board?

JACO: On my first album I used mostly my amp and went a little direct. (Jaco uses an Acoustic 360 amp.) Since then I go direct simply because it's easier, plus boards in the studio have gotten a lot better, so that you really don't need amps and stuff. The outboard stuff has gotten much hipper.

GUITAR: How do you set the controls on your bass?

JACO: I hardly ever use the front pickup. Once in a while I'll do it just to create a different sound. But usually I have my back pickup up all the way and I'll turn down the tone control to change my sound.

GUITAR: What do you feel has made you a successful bassist and what does it take for anybody to become a successful bassist?

JACO: BALLS!!! (laughs). You've got to learn a lot about music. You've got to learn lots of tunes. I learned how to play by listening to records and the radio. I didn't know how to read till I was in my early 20's. Learn every possible style of music. I played country and western for a year. I played shows off and on for five or six years. I would suggest that you learn to read music and really get into it.

GUITAR: What part do you feel attitude and/or personality plays in the success of a bass player?

JACO: It means a lot. You've got to know how to talk to people, for one thing. A musician like me, doin' what I'm doin', I'm not playin' sessions or anything like that. I'm stayin' alive by just blowin'. You've got to be very diplomatic and have a good sense of humor.

GUITAR: How does a player develop a musical personality or style?

JACO: I feel technique would play a big role. There's certain things facility-wise that I do that I know nobody else can do. These are just things I've worked on, plus the size of my hands enables me to do lots of things that I know other bass players can't do 'cause their hands ain't this big. Your attack with your right hand would contribute to creating a sound or style.

GUITAR: You were one of the first people to explore the full range of harmonics on the electric bass. How did you get involved with that sound?

JACO: When I first started playing the bass, I was tuning it with harmonics. They sounded good and I just got to playing more of them. I figured out what all of them were musically and where they could be produced. I figured out every single note, then I started puttin' them into things. Like I can run scales up and down the neck with harmonics. But you have to jump over every string to go diatonically.

GUITAR: How did you happen to get started with false harmonics?

JACO: Some guitar player showed me how to make them when I was around 15. He showed me how he did it with holding his finger lightly on the string and plucking the note with his thumb. Now I do it with my thumb and pluck with my finger. I used the exact same principle as an open string. Then I took my left hand and used it as if it were a capo and measured it in half and plucked at that point. But then there's one thing that I do from that point, which is to produce all the natural

Continued on page 46

Tablature Explanation see pg. 92

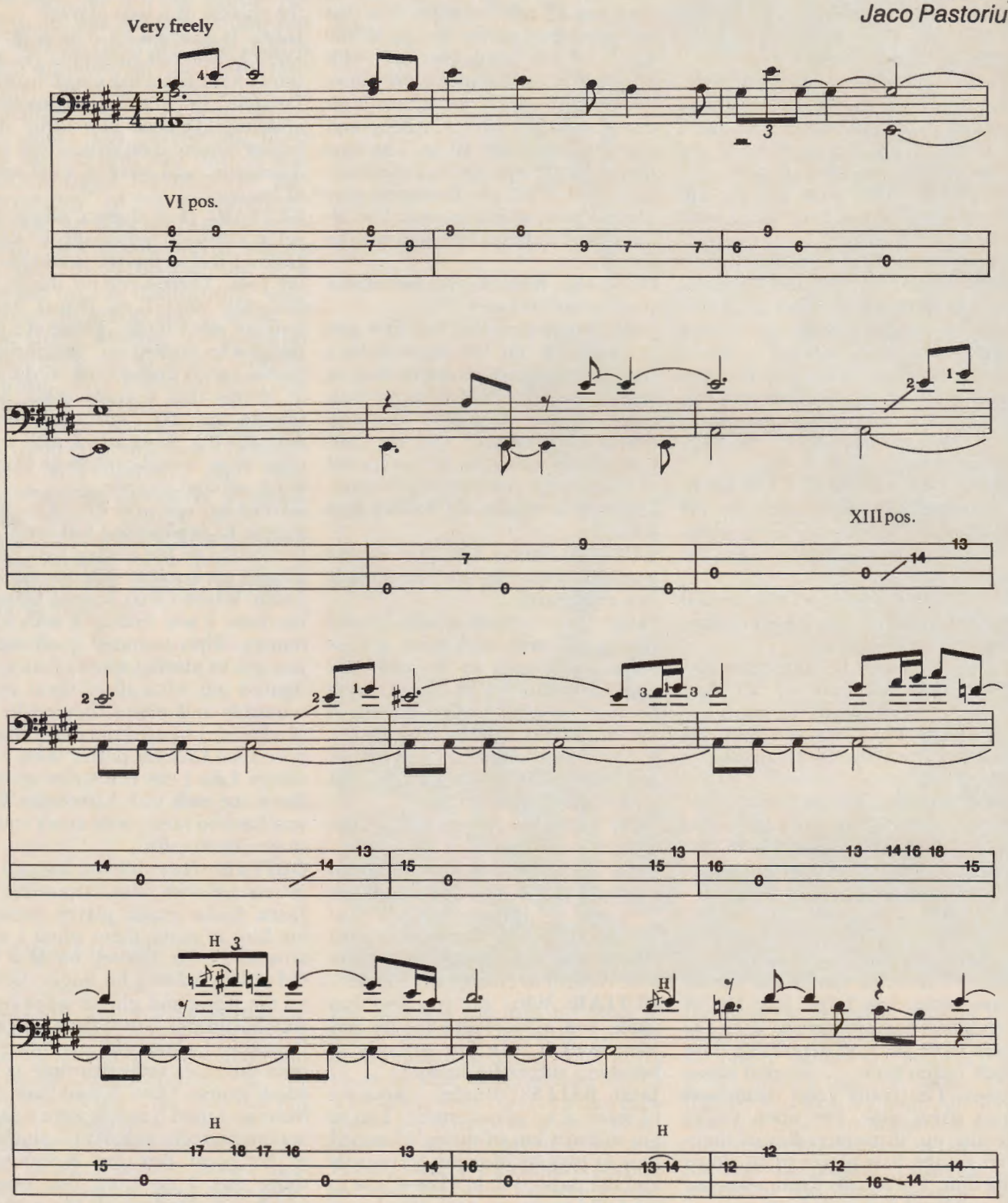
CONTINUUM

Bass Solo

As recorded by Jaco Pastorius

(From the album INVITATION/Warner Brothers 23876-1)

Music by
Jaco Pastorius



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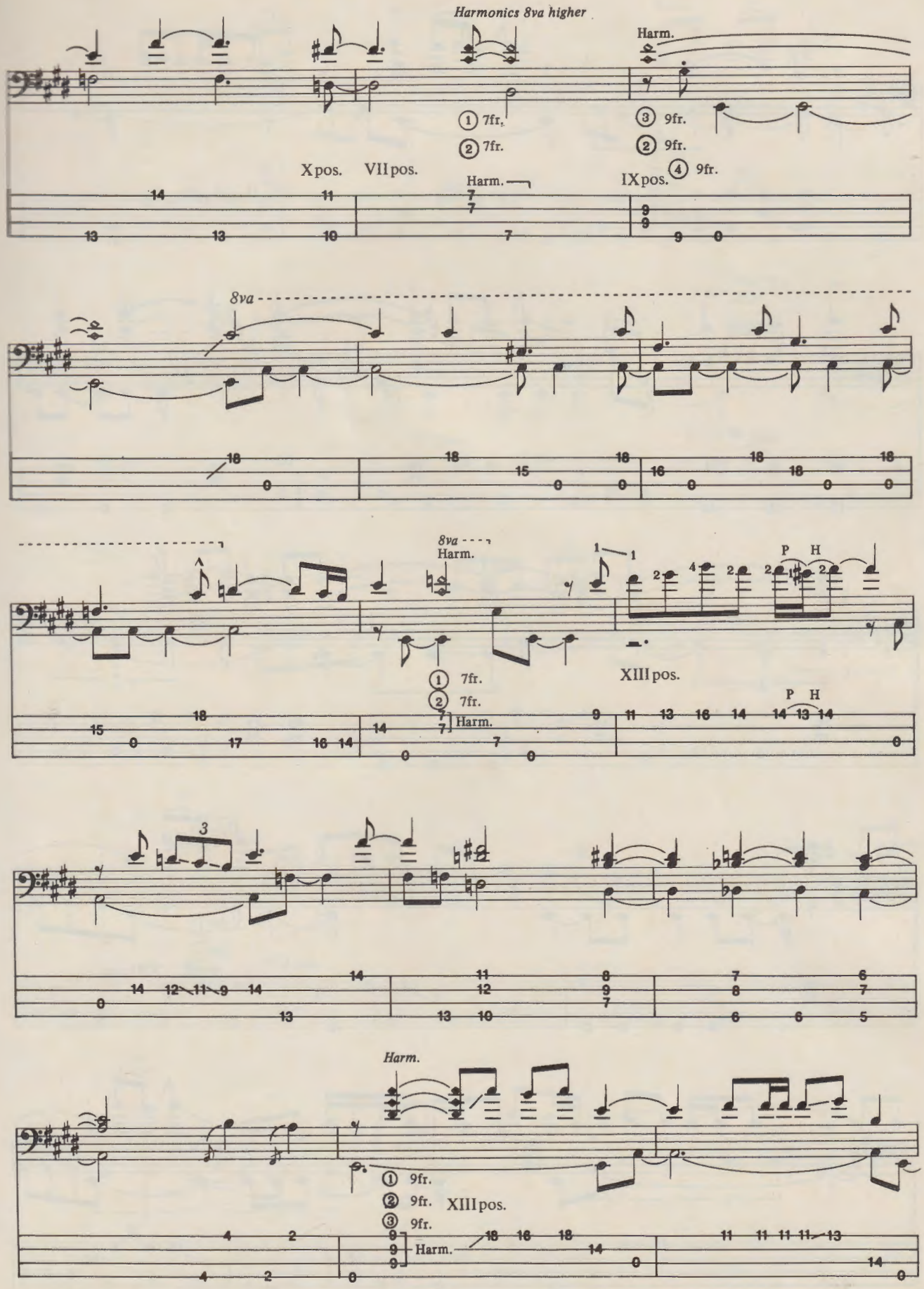
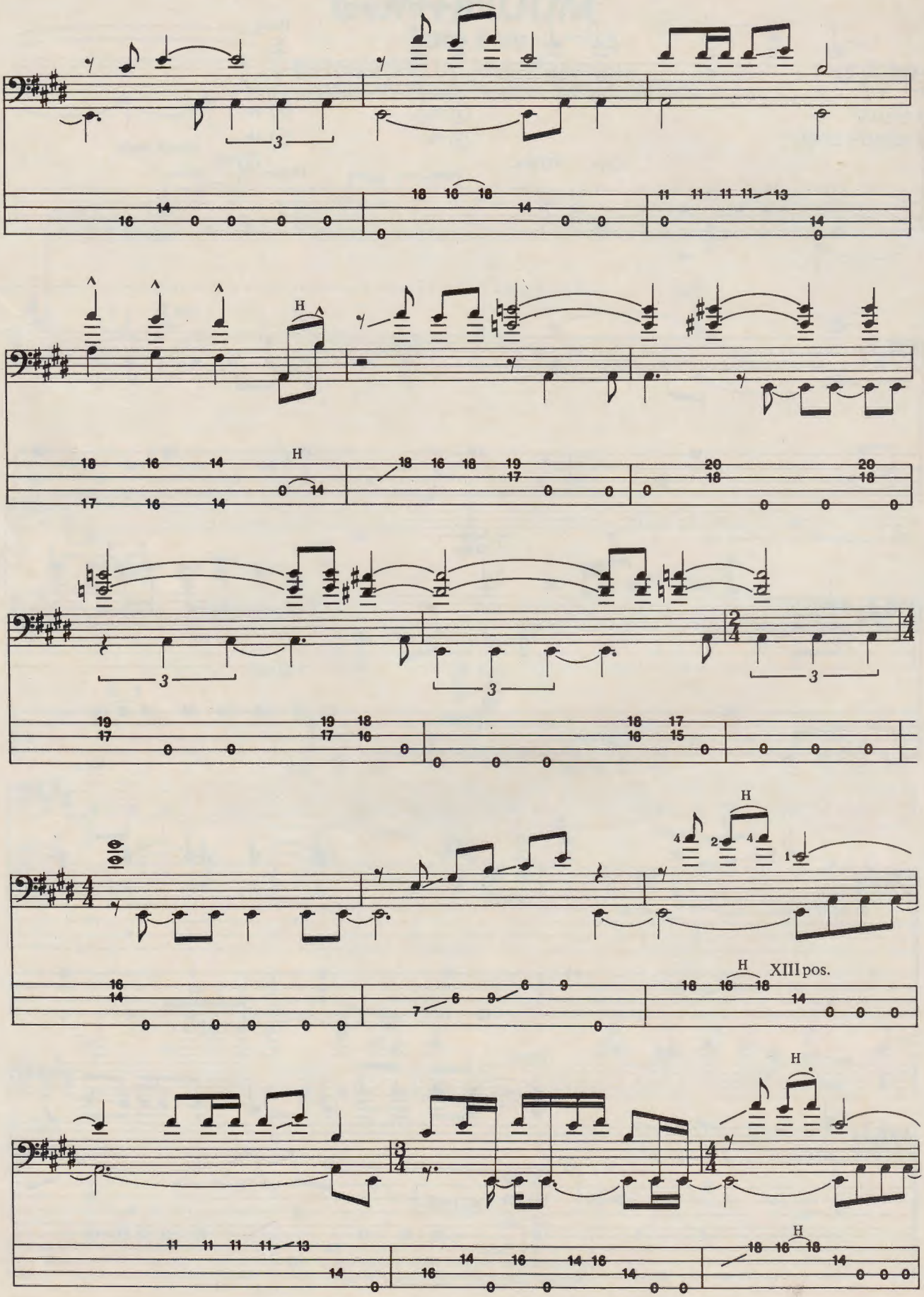
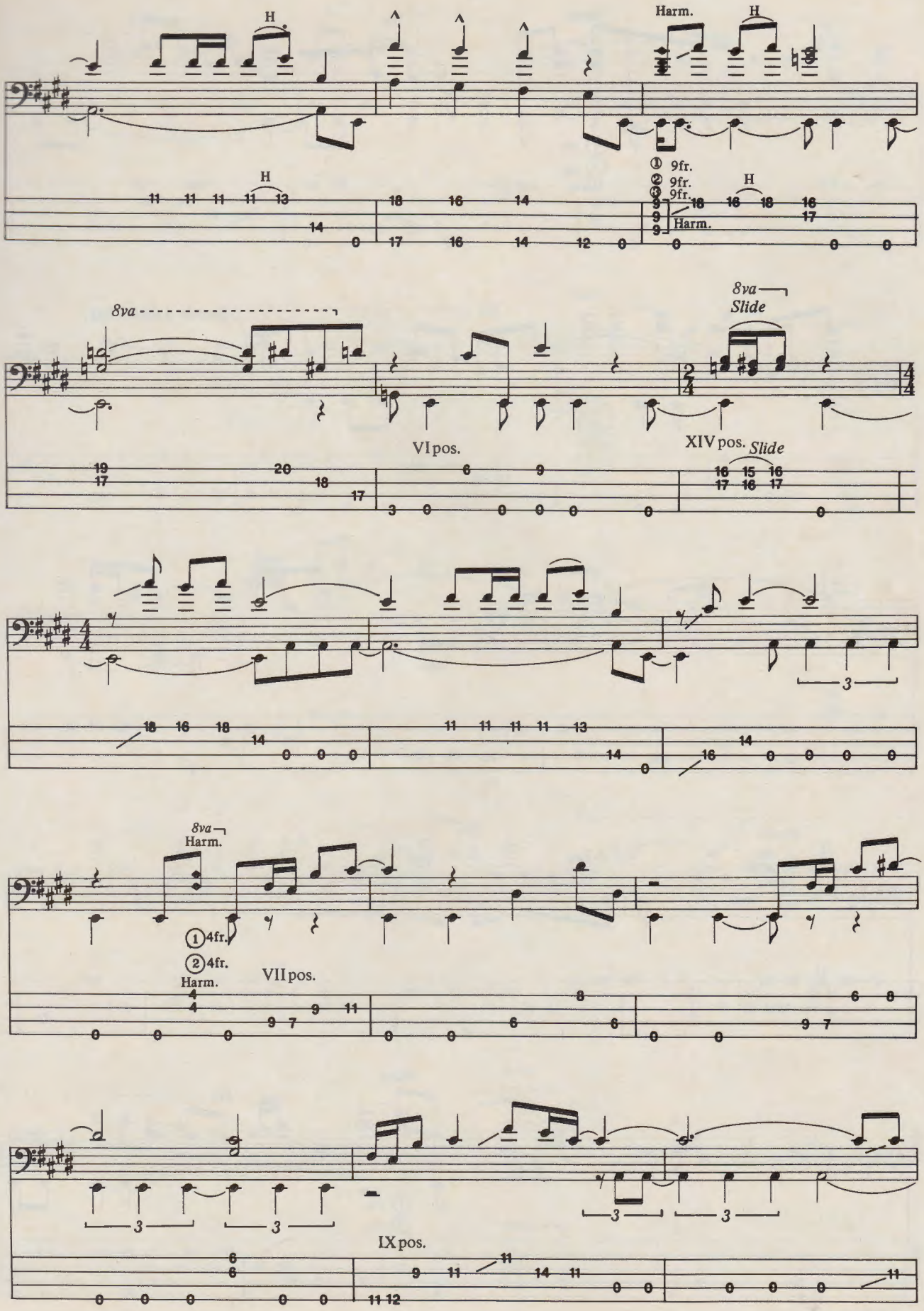
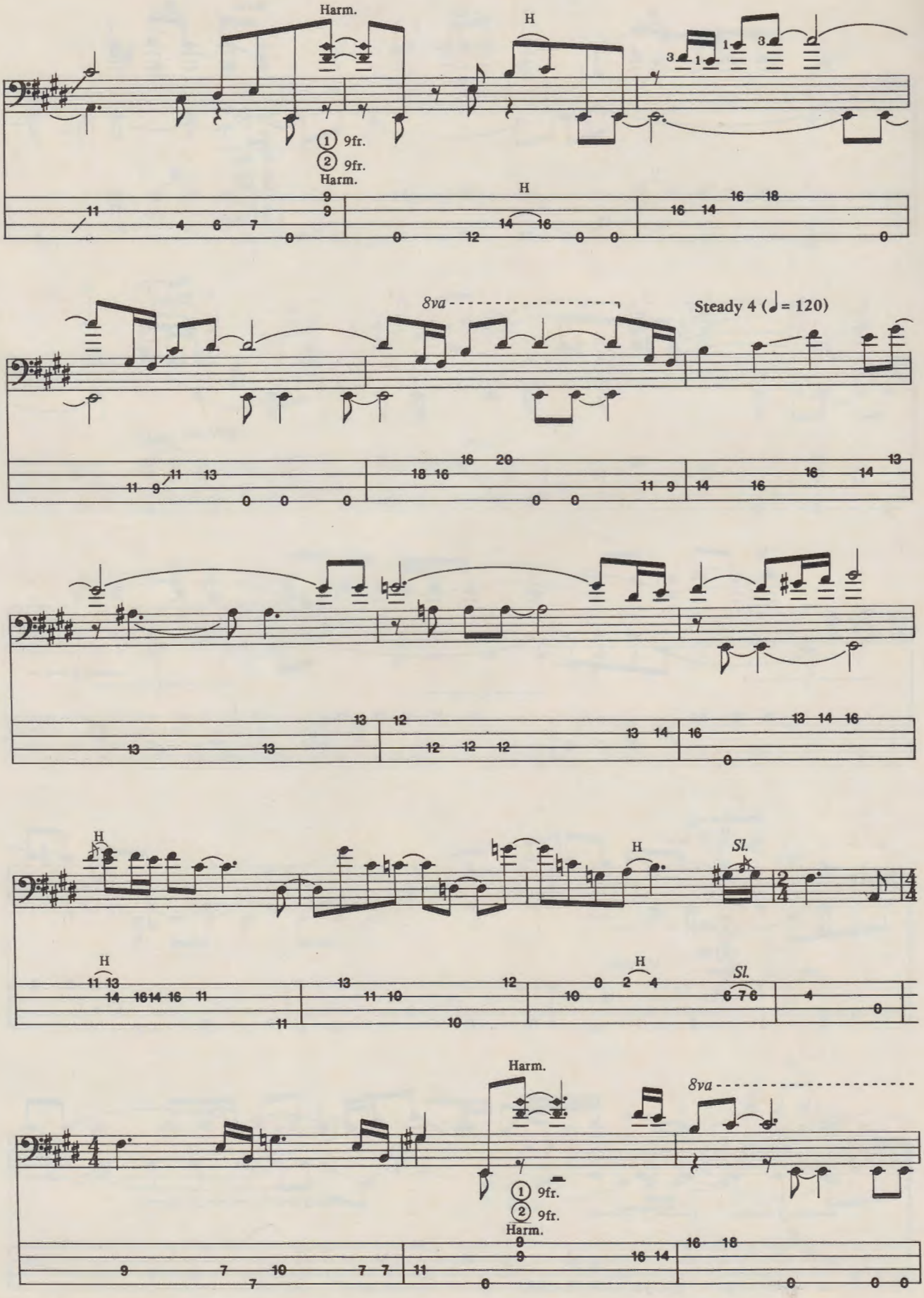
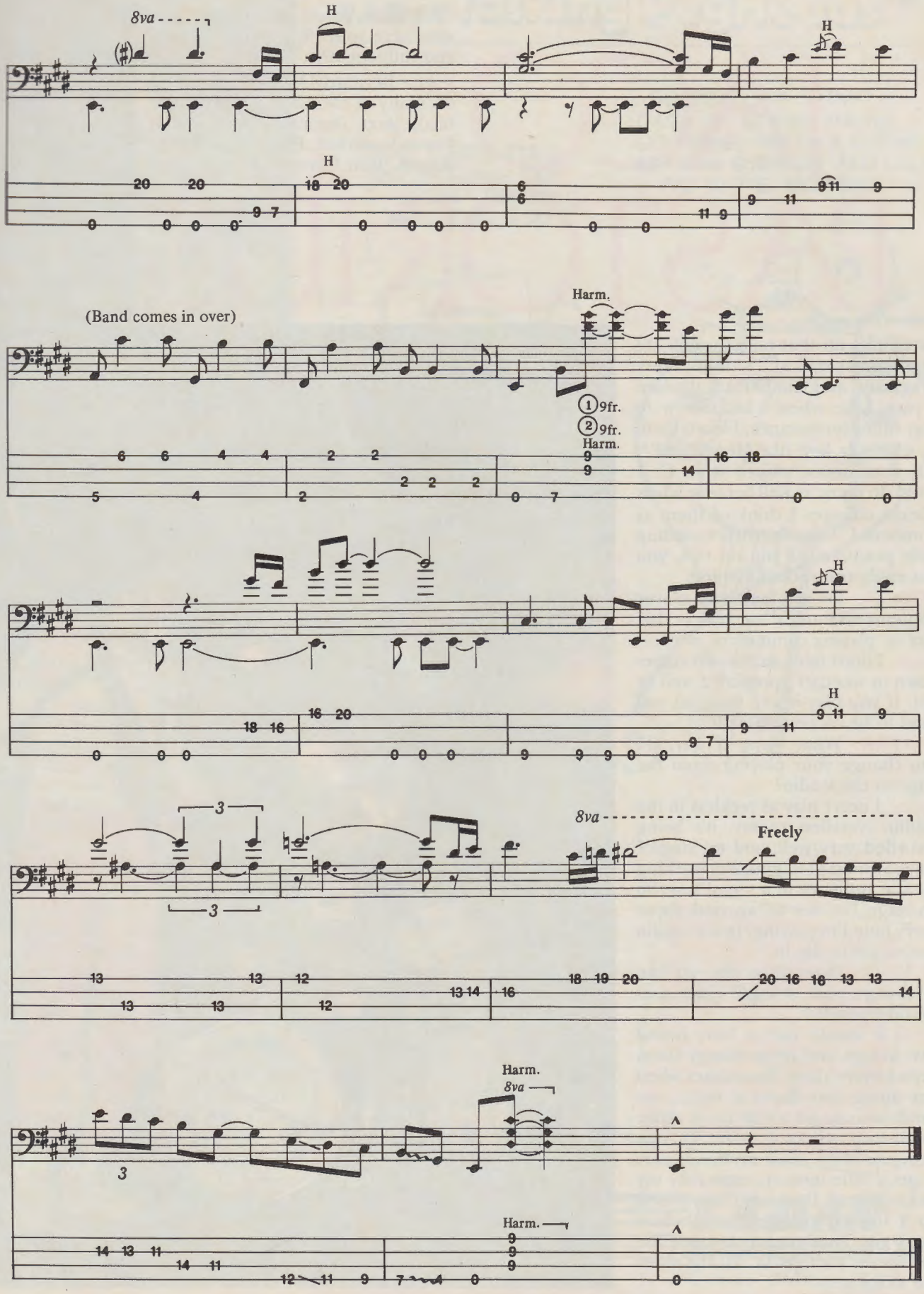

Harmonics 8va higher
Harm.
① 7fr.
② 7fr.
③ 9fr.
② 9fr.
④ 9fr.
X pos.
VII pos.
IX pos.
Harm.
8va
8va
Harm.
① 7fr.
② 7fr.
Harm.
XIII pos.
P H
P H
3
Harm.
① 9fr.
② 9fr.
③ 9fr.
XIII pos.
Harm.


H
H
H
H
H
XIII pos.
H
H


H
Harm.
H
① 9fr.
② 9fr.
③ 9fr.
H
Harm.
8va
8va
Slide
VI pos.
XIV pos.
Slide
8va
Harm.
① 4fr.
② 4fr.
Harm.
VII pos.
IX pos.


Harm.
H
1 9fr.
2 9fr.
Harm.
H
8va
Steady 4 (♩= 120)
H
H
Sl.
H
H
Sl.
Harm.
8va
1 9fr.
2 9fr.
Harm.


8va
H
(Band comes in over)
Harm.
1 9fr.
2 9fr.
Harm.
3
8va
Freely
Harm.
8va
Harm.

JACO PASTORIUS

Continued from page 39

harmonics on that note as well. It's very mathematical. I think very pragmatic and mathematical when I play. Like when I learn how to play tunes for instance, I learn them in whatever key, like *Misty* is in E♭. But if someone played it in C, I could do it just as well because when I learn changes I think of them as numbers. I, V for the corresponding scale positions. If you do this, you can easily transpose anything.

GUITAR: Do you feel that a player impugns his musical integrity or dignity by playing commercial music?

JACO: I don't think so. It really comes down to whether you play it well or not. If you play it well that's all you need to be concerned with.

GUITAR: What ways, if any, do you change your playing from the stage to the studio?

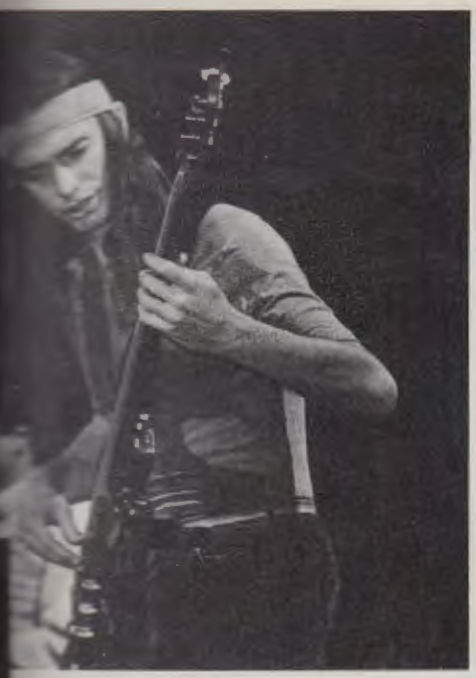
JACO: I don't play as reckless in the studio. Needless to say, it's being recorded very well, and on stage I move around a lot. Plus, I'm working for the audience in a visual way. So on stage I'm not as worried about every note I'm playing. In the studio you've got to dig in.

GUITAR: How often do you like to change your strings? (Jaco uses round wounds.)

JACO: I usually like to have brand new strings, and try to change them before every show. Sometimes when I'm doing two shows a night, my hands start to get a little tired. After about two weeks I won't change strings as often 'cause my hands start to get a little torn up, especially my picking hand. But once I'm warmed up I like to change them before every gig. That's mostly because the harmonics start gettin' flat the older the string gets.

GUITAR: When you started out, who were your favorite bass players and influences?

JACO: Bernard Odum (bass player on many of the early James Brown hits), Jerry Jemmott, Duck Dunn, James Jamerson, Pops Popwell, Ray Brown, Ron Carter and Gary Pea-



Robert A. Minkin

cock. All these cats had influences on me early on.

GUITAR: What instrument would you play if you didn't play bass?

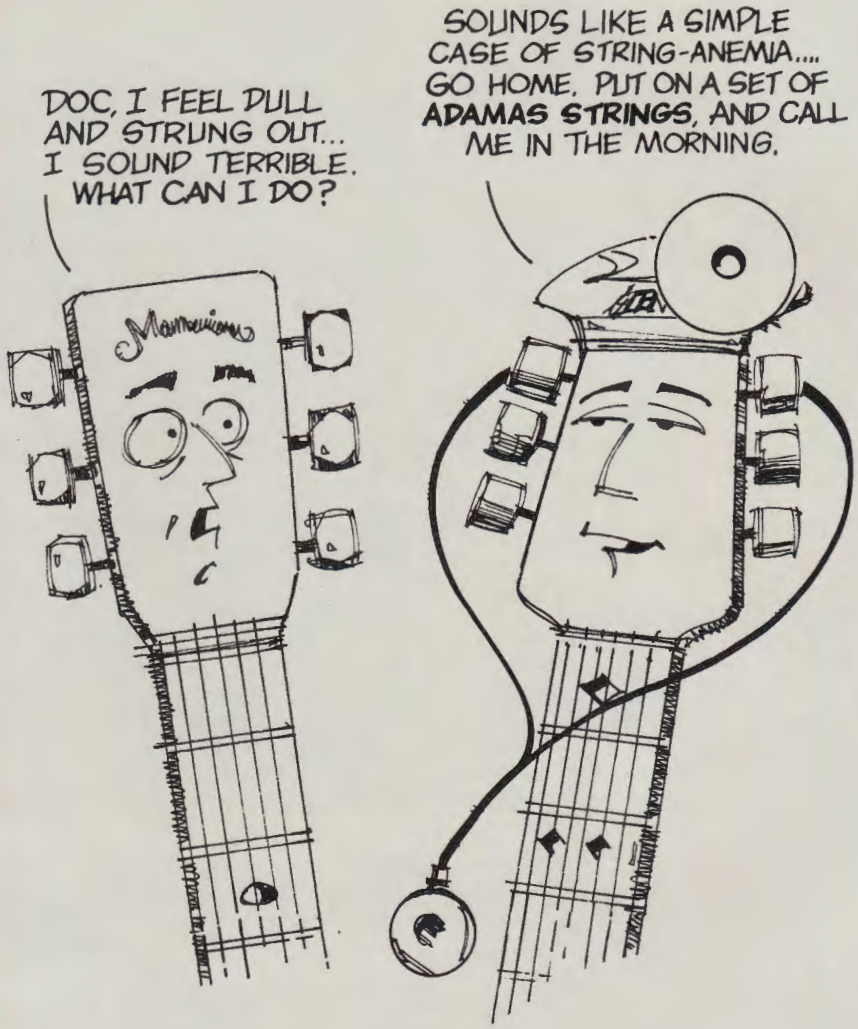
JACO: Drums, but that's not a fair answer, because I play the drums. I might like to play the bassoon. It's got sort of the same timbre, range and sound that I get on my Fender bass.

GUITAR: Is there anything you'd like to tell bass players who are just starting out?

JACO: If you have the opportunity, you should work out on drums and piano. I think that's essential for every bass player—because you get the harmonic concept and you get the rhythmic concept as well. Also, don't do any drugs or drinkin' or nothin', at least until you're much older. Till at least you know what you're doin', because it will not help you at all. When I was a young kid lots of my friends were phenomenal musicians and never got anywhere past where they started because they started getting high. So that's a definite waste of time. Listen to as much music and as many different types as you can. Learn how to read. When I practiced I used cello books 'cause they're really good for you as a bass guitarist. There really weren't any bass books to study so I got legitimate cello books, the *Dotuzauer Books 113 Cello Studies*. It's four different books. I've done trombone studies as well, but the cello is hipper 'cause the cello is tuned in fifths and you get these incredible skips, which is really good for your hands. ■

Randy Bachman

KAMAN Talking PegHeads #1



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ALEX LIFESON OF RUSH

Still in School

by John Stix

ALEX LIFESON NEIL PEART GEDDY LEE

Greg Bowler

Most people try out new songs on their friends in the basement. Most bands warm up for recording in rehearsal halls. It's safer. But then, Rush have never played it safe. So last fall, when it came time to warm up for the recording of their album, **Grace Under Pressure**, Rush went looking for an appropriate hall. Never known for a small sound, they chose Radio City Music

been how can three guys make so much sound—but rather, how can the same three guys make so many different sounds?

Like so many of the finest groups, Rush is defined by distinct periods. The early albums were Zeppelin clones. The middle period shows the heavy trappings of the British art rockers. More recently, keyboards and a stripped-down sound have brought Rush to the top, firmly defining them as the premiere modern metalists of the 80s. **GUITAR** spoke with Rush guitarist Alex Lifeson about these changes and how he's been able to grow on the guitar without growing old.

ALEX: Songs like *Oh Pretty Woman* from John Mayall's **Crusade** album bring back memories of when we started. I would spend months trying to figure out songs like this, early on in my guitar playing career. Mick Taylor's sound was exceptional for that time. He had that grit and sustain, and the right kind of smooth distortion.

GUITAR: Has anything come to replace the kind of intensity that you displayed the years before and during the first few albums?

ALEX: That intensity is an exuberance to play the guitar really well. When you hear these great solos, that gives you something to get going with. When you achieve a certain level of competence you start to open up a bit and not be quite as intense. In the context of a group you become more sensitive to your position in that band. For me as a guitarist, as the group evolved, it became more important to become part of the group rather than the guitarist or the bassist or the drummer. The idea was to become a complete unit. So that maybe you're not playing a million notes a second, but something that fits the context of what's going on. In that sense there is a change, a shift to a different kind of intensity. It's something you get in time. You can definitely hear that original guitar intensity on the first few albums, certainly the first. That was in '70 or '71 and our influences were pretty apparent. The guitar did play more of a lead role.

GUITAR: Was Rush a trio because you wanted to follow in the footsteps of Cream or Hendrix?

ALEX: Not really, it just happened. John, our original drummer, and I played together for quite a while. I knew Geddy from school. He played in another group but we jammed quite often. My band got a gig in a drop-in center at a church. The following week we had a chance to do the same gig again, for $15 or $20. Our bass player couldn't make it and I called Ged up and it went on from there. In '69 we had a keyboard player in the group. He went on to become Geddy's brother-in-law. He was in the band for a few months and then we broke up. Later in '72 we had another guitarist for about six months. That didn't work out either. We always felt more comfortable as a three-piece. Then John left and Neil came into the band. It's always been a good chemistry for us and we've always been used to working in this context.

GUITAR: Would it be easier sometimes if you had a keyboard player in the band?

ALEX: Absolutely, it would be a lot easier. Over the years you become used to having to use your feet, as well as your hands. In Geddy's case he's using both feet, both hands and his mouth. I think in the studio we feel a little restricted in that we want to remain true to what we're doing on stage. Consequently, you don't hear rhythm guitar during the solo, you don't hear bass guitar during keyboard parts.

GUITAR: When you solo, do you think about the rhythm guitar parts that might be there and play over them?

ALEX: When we write a song I think in context of a space for the solo. It's left at that. We work on the arrangement to get it tight. When we go into the studio to get the basic tracks down, I spend a couple of days and start doing my solos then. That is usually the first time I think about or work on my solos. Occasionally, I'll throw something down while we're writing just to fill in that space. Very seldom do I use anything. On *The Weapon* I used a couple of things that came out during those writing sessions. Normally I spend a couple of days on solos and work from scratch. We work on getting a sound. I try to get a feel for what the solo should be doing and then pursue different directions. I might pursue something for hours and do a collage. I'll drop in a whole different section to see how it feels. Then I relearn the solo when we get ready to go back on the road.

GUITAR: The solo gives you the freedom that's not normally written into the composition.

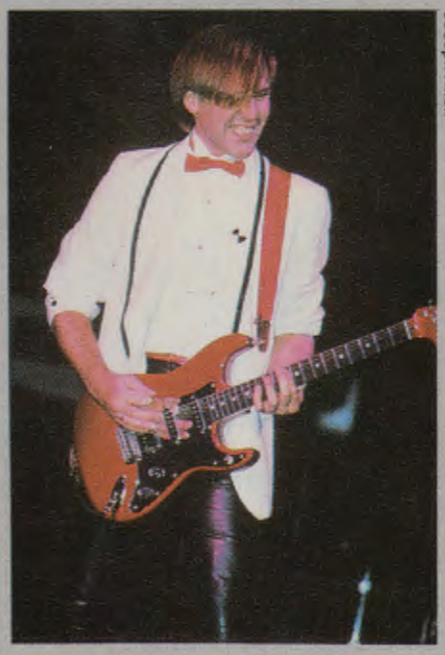
ALEX: Definitely, that's what I feed off. We are such a regimented band and basically do the same thing each night. The solos give me freedom to experiment and go wild.

GUITAR: *Villa de Strange* seems to be your song in concert.

ALEX: I always enjoy playing that solo. I like the changes and it's a very emotive bluesy kind of solo. It too stays basically the same every night. The band is in the background modulating between two notes and it gives me a chance to wail.

GUITAR: A song like *Countdown* has a bar of 4/4 followed by a bar of 11/8. Was this rhythmic twist the core idea for writing the song?

ALEX: It's more of a feel thing than a conscious effort. The way we write, we have the lyric or an idea of what the song is going to be. That idea sets a mood. By changing the time signature you can change the whole effect of the song. I guess in that respect we do go off into those changes without making a conscious effort. Yet it does make the song more complex. That influence came from the British progressive movement and bands like Yes and Genesis. They had a big influence on us. I guess you're always picking something that is around that has an effect on the way you hear music. As long as you can hear those things and apply them, you're growing. A lot of times bands lock into something and stay there and that's the end. They make two or three records of the same thing, which happen to be their most popular, and that's it for them.



Joseph Allen

GUITAR: I recall from our last meeting together that Steve Hackett was your major influence from the progressive movement.

ALEX: Yes, Steve Hackett is so articulate and melodic, precise and flowing. I think our **Caress of Steel** period is when I was most influenced by him. There's even a solo on that album which is almost a steal from his style of playing. It's one of my favorites, called *No One at the Bridge*. I even sounded like Steve Hackett.

GUITAR: Can you recall when you knew you sounded like Alex Lifeson?

ALEX: I remember it in spurts. I remember in solos that every once in a while I did something I felt was truly original, that came from me without having obvious influences. There wasn't any one point where I thought, "I sound like myself." Even now, in '84, I find it difficult to do that. I'd say since **Moving Pictures** I feel like I've moved into my own space. Style is a difficult thing to define. I can't begin to say what I think my style is.

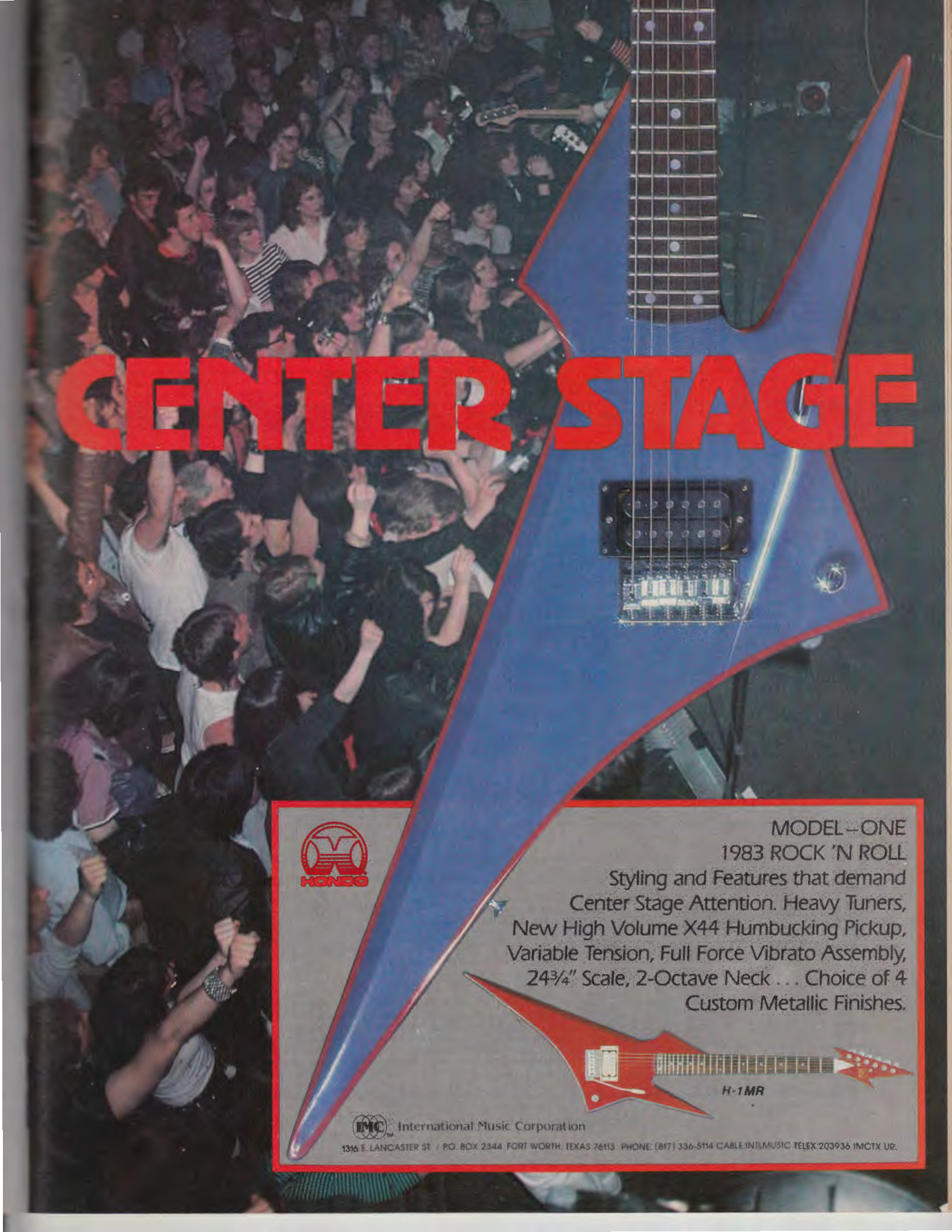
GUITAR: Do you have any particular chord changes which you like to play over?

ALEX: With each album I have favorite chord changes, which I then don't like to repeat on the next album. Suspended chords have always been my favorites. They seem so broad. Your harmonic content becomes much greater. It comes from that same school of making more out of the music because we are only a three-piece band. The chorus to *Analog Kid* has broad sounding chords in the sense of triad rock chords. The new album has that sound also.

GUITAR: On this new record the guitar sounds more prominent again. The chords ring longer and the guitar parts in general are more clearly defined.

ALEX: That's exactly what we were going for. In retrospect, **Signals** tried to achieve a focus on the keyboards. We wanted the guitar to become part of the rhythm. I enjoy rhythm guitar very much and try to make the most of that genre. Unfortunately, somewhere along the line we lost it. We wanted the guitar to be more angular. The usual formula in the studio was to put the guitar down and triple track it to layer the guitar sound so it was massive. On **Signals** we wanted to change things, and unfortunately, the guitar took a back seat. When we started on this new album we wanted to bring the guitar back into the forefront and strike the proper balance between all the elements.

Continued on page 59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Tablature Explanation see pg. 92

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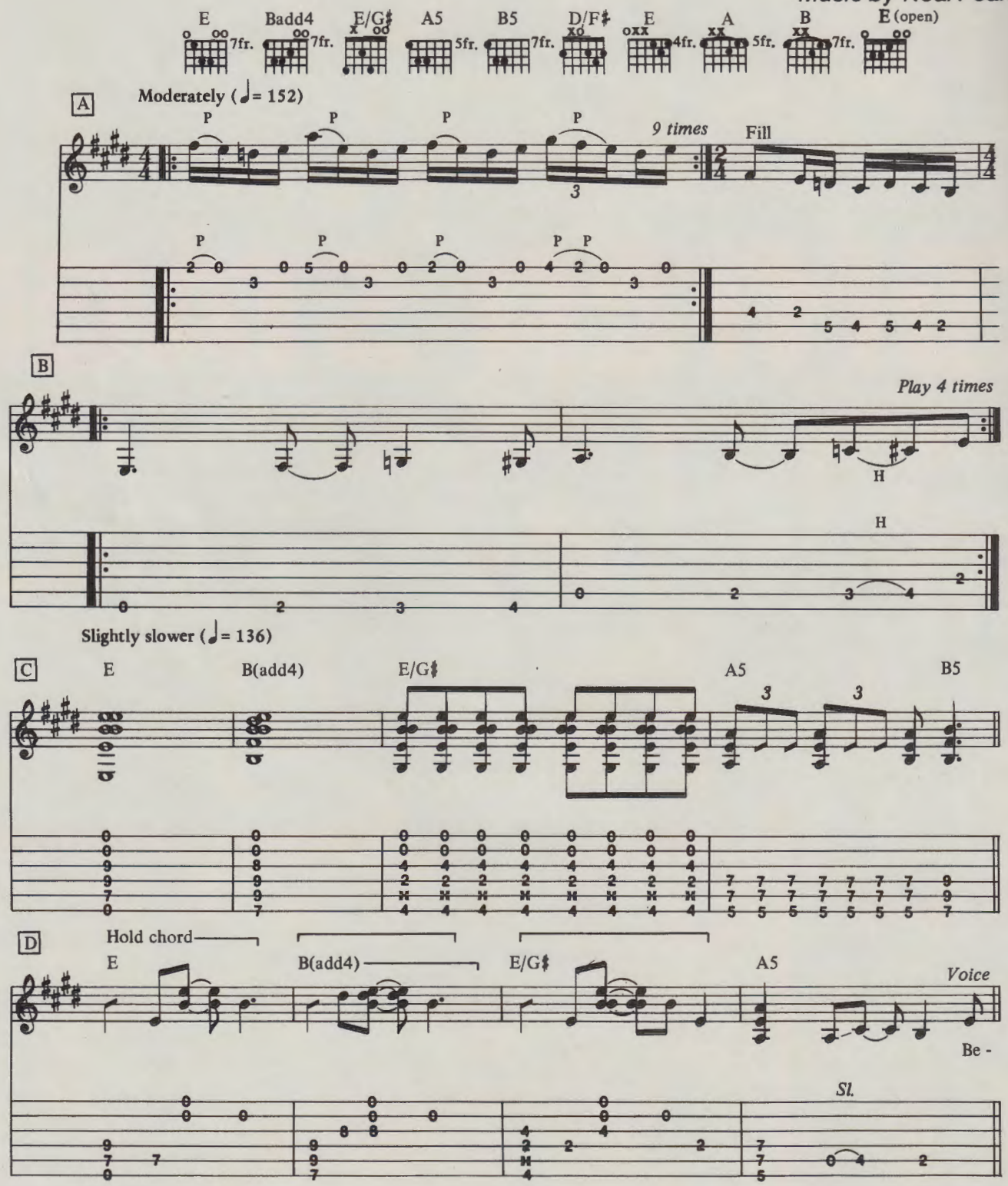
(From the album PERMANENT WAVES/Mercury SRM 1-4001

Words by Geddy Lee and Alex Lifeson

Music by Neal Peart



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(see below)

E E(7fr.) B(add4) E/G♯

gin the day— with a friend - ly voice,– a com - pan - ion un - ob - tru -

A5 B5 E E B(add4)

sive. Plays that song— that's so e - lu - sive, and the

E/G♯ A5 B5 D E E

mag - ic mu - sic makes your morn - ing mood.— Off on your way,— hit the o -

B(add4) E/G♯ A5 B5

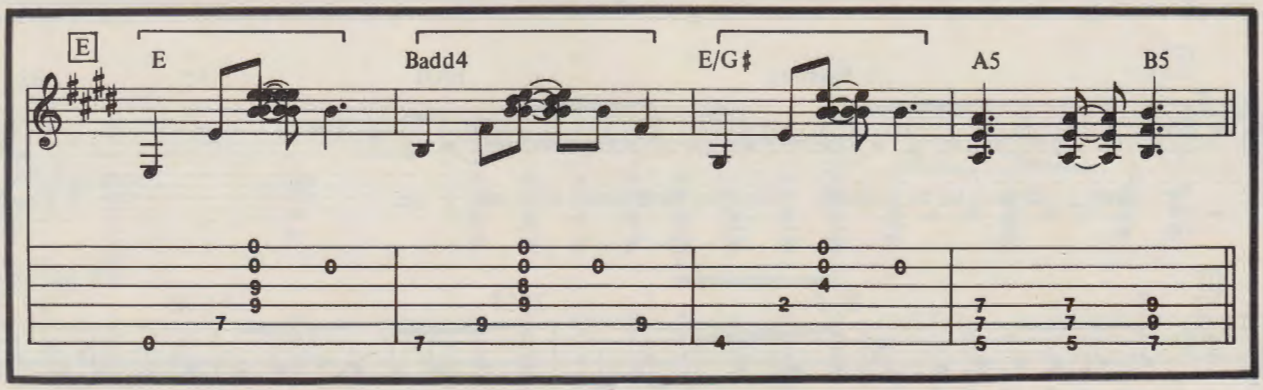
pen road,— there is mag - ic at— your fin - gers.

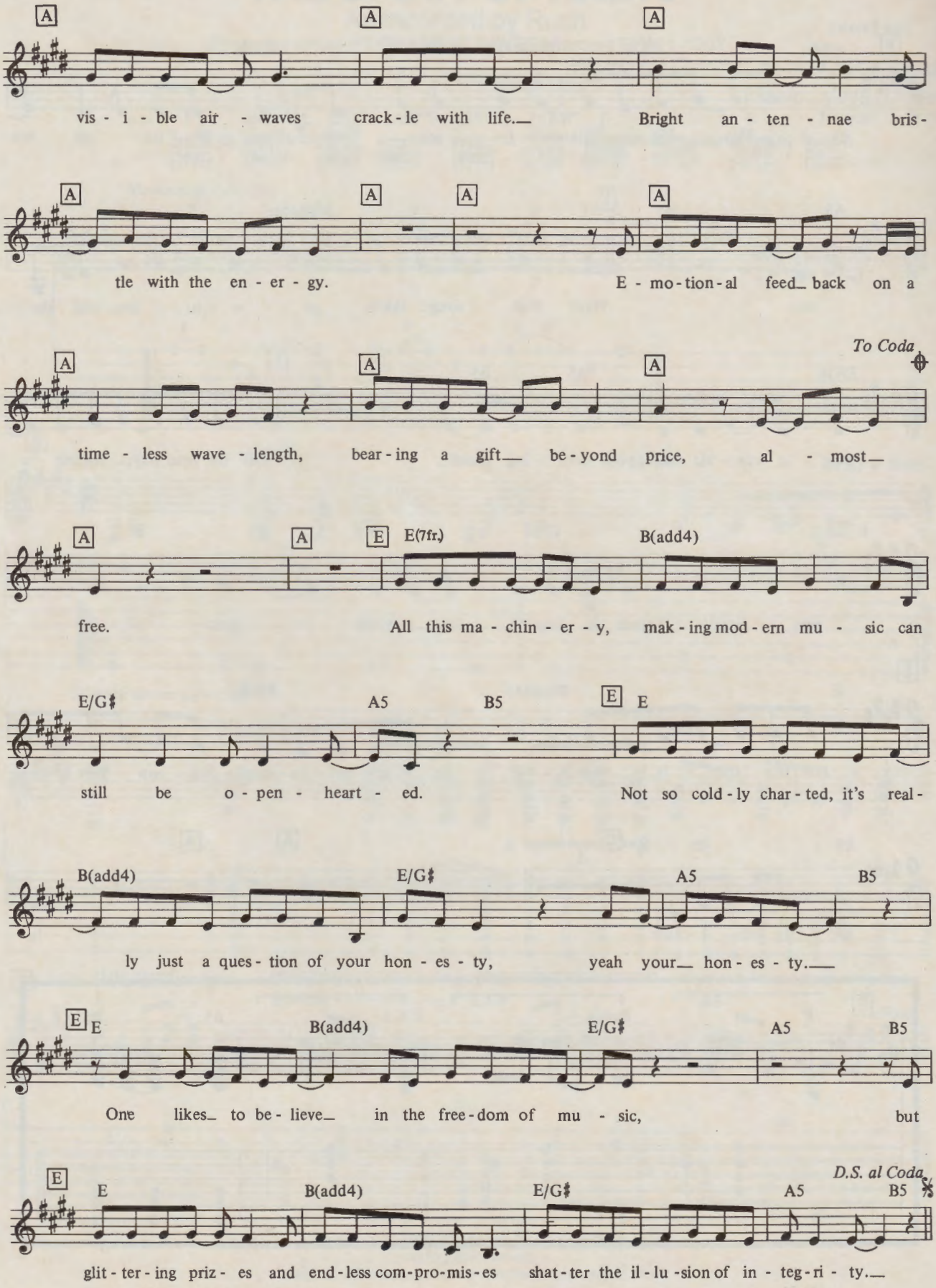
E E B(add4) E/G♯

For the spir - it— ev - er lin - gers un - de - mand - ing con - tact in your

A5 B5 C E A A

hap - py sol - i - tude. In -




A
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tle with the en - er - gy. E - mo - tion - al feed back on a
To Coda
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free. All this ma - chin - er - y, mak - ing mod - ern mu - sic can
E(7fr.)
B(add4)
E/G♯
A5
B5
E
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ly just a ques - tion of your hon - es - ty, yeah your hon - es - ty.
One likes to be - lieve in the free - dom of mu - sic, but
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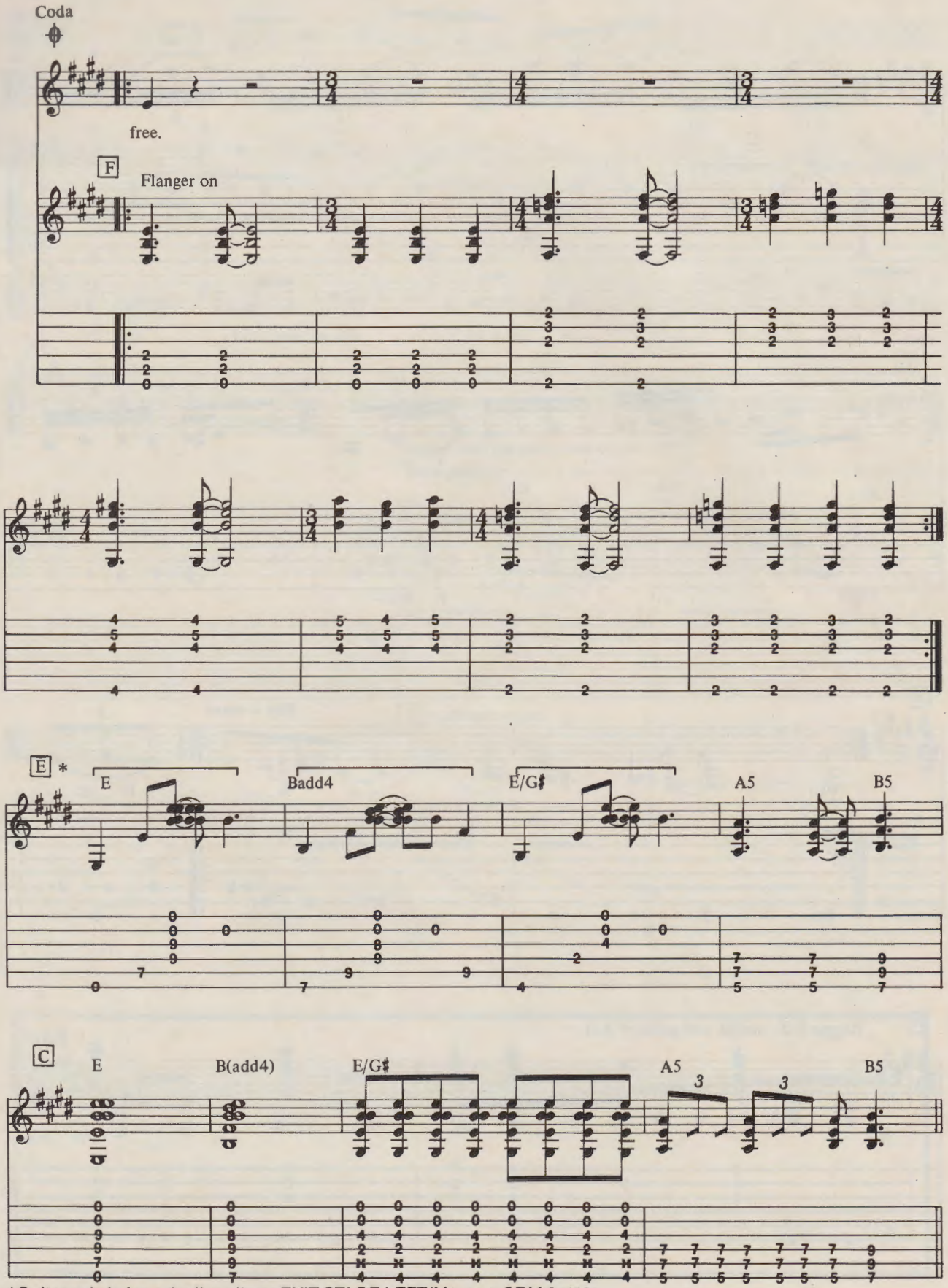
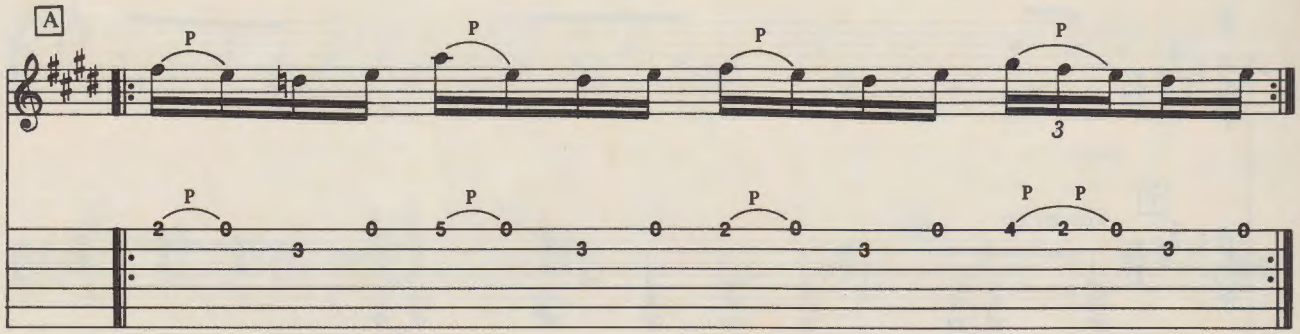


*Guitar solo is from the live album EXIT STAGE LEFT/Mercury SRM 2-7001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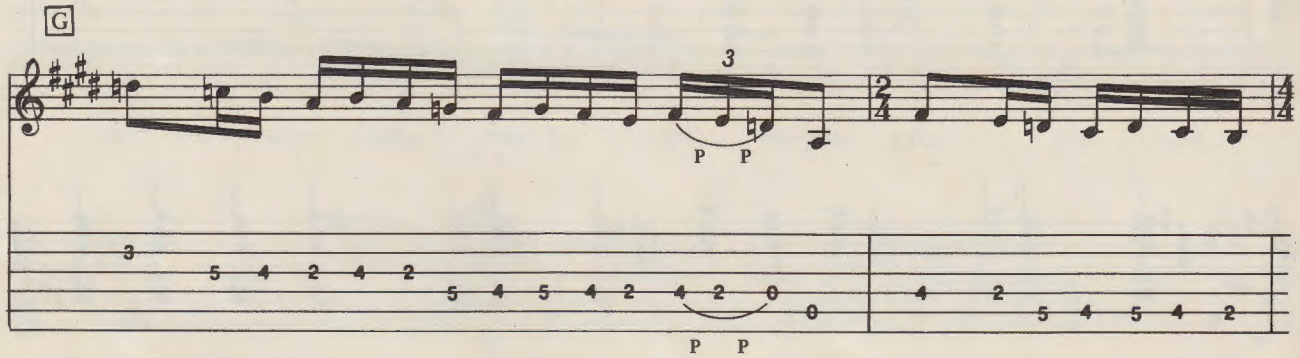
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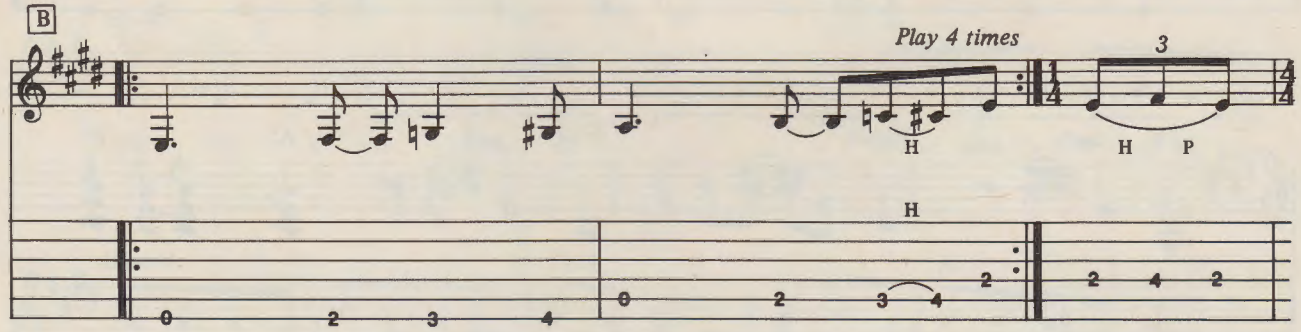
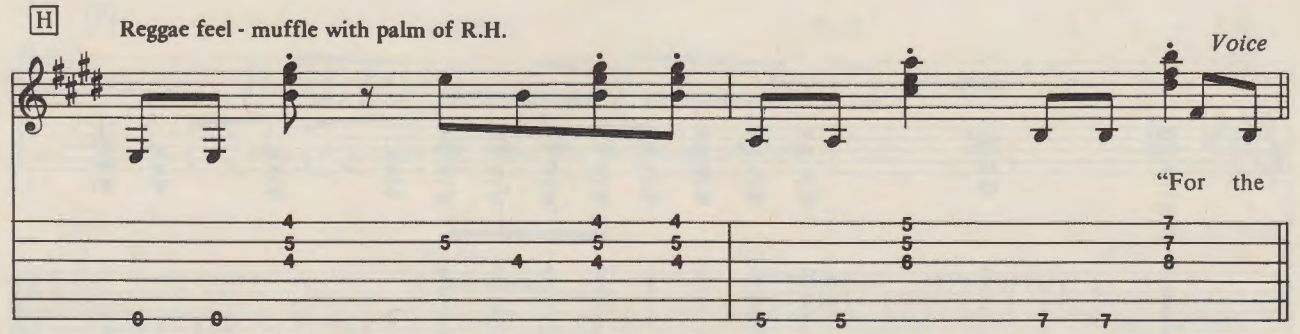
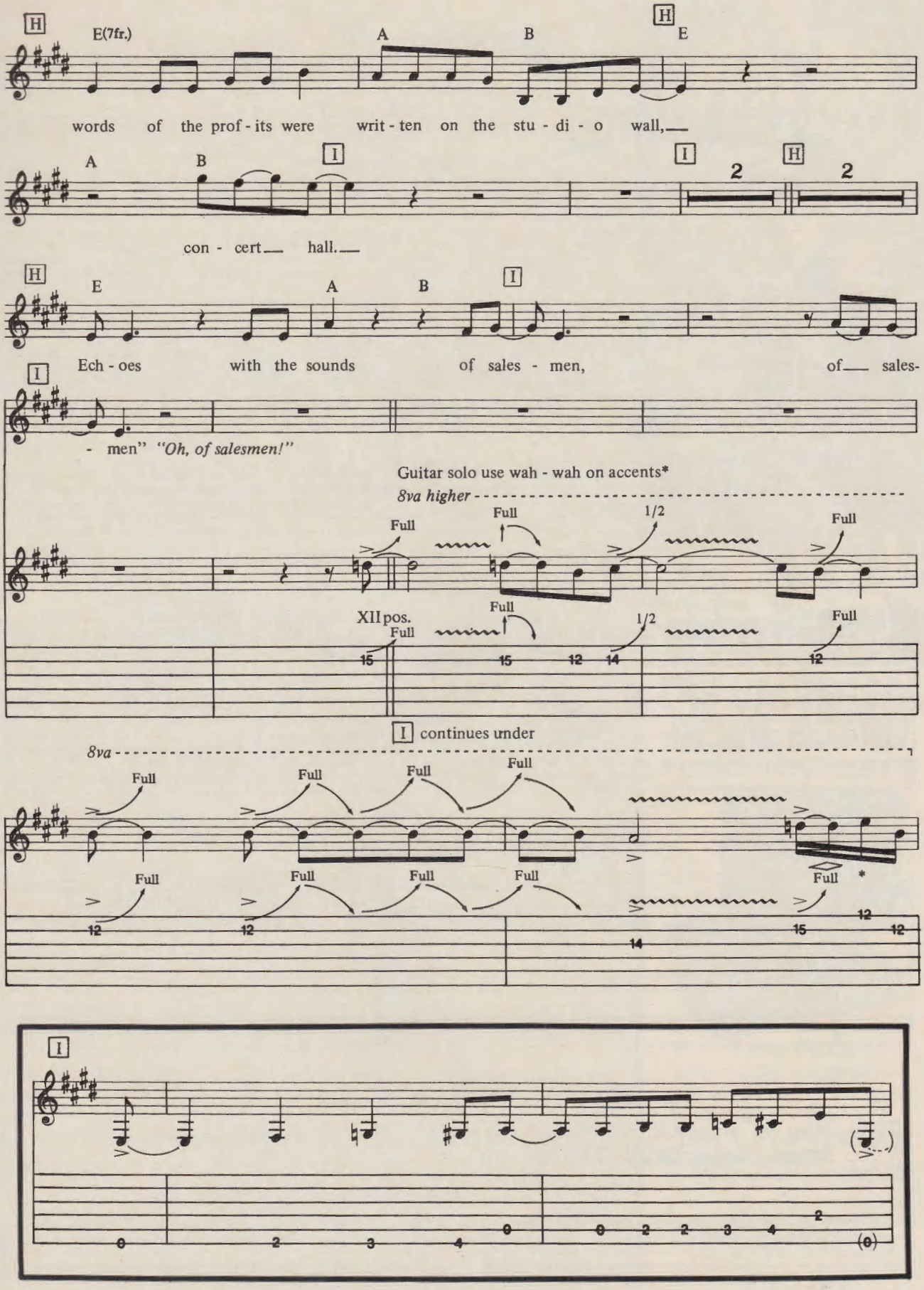

B
Play 4 times
3
H
H P
H


H
Reggae feel - muffle with palm of R.H.
Voice
"For the


H
E(7fr.)
A
B
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E
words of the prof - its were writ - ten on the stu - di - o wall,
A
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I
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2
con - cert hall.
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E
A
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I
Ech - oes with the sounds of sales - men, of sales-
I
- men" "Oh, of salesmen!"
Guitar solo use wah - wah on accents*
8va higher
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Full
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8va
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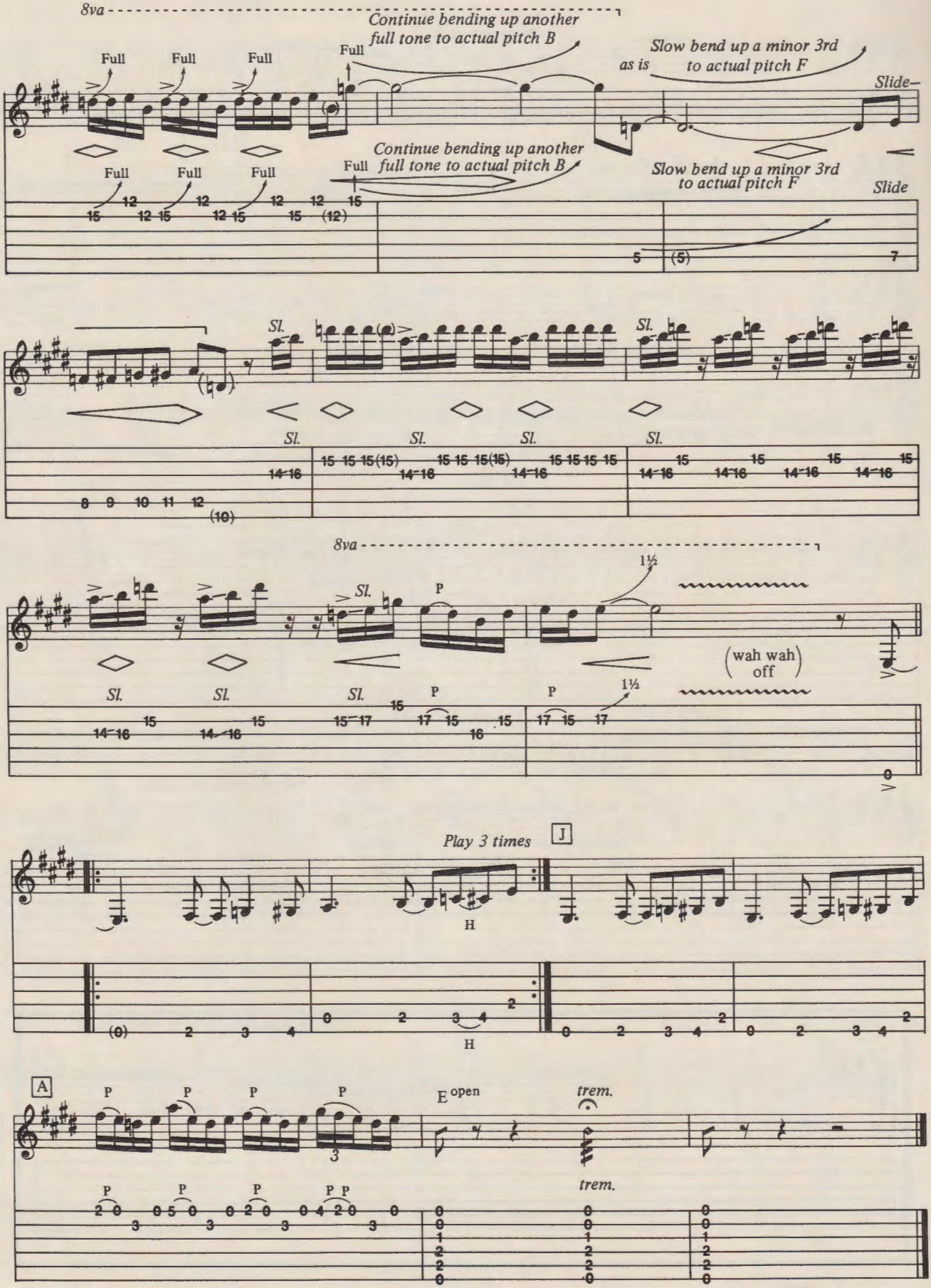
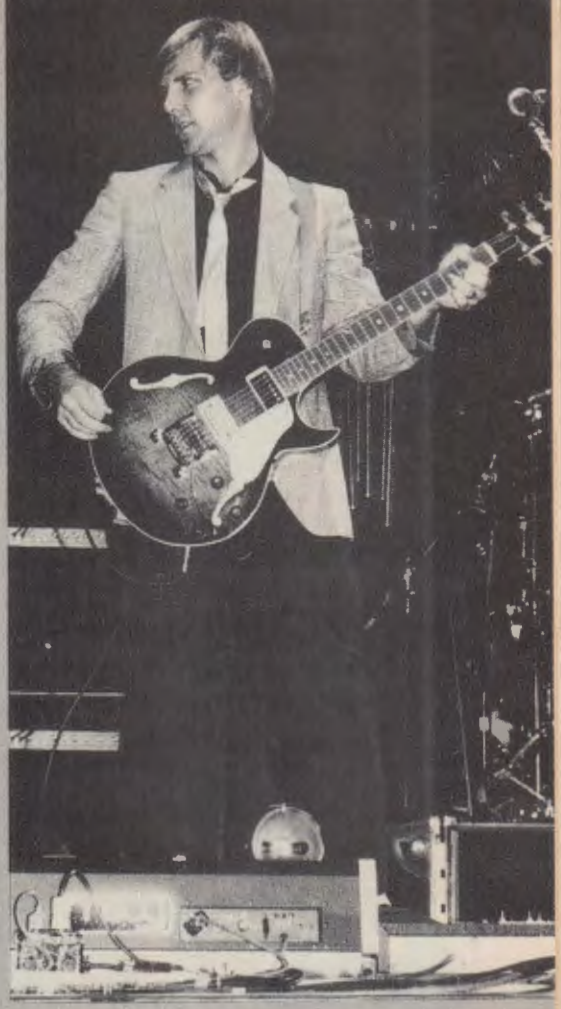

8va
Full
Continue bending up another full tone to actual pitch B
Slow bend up a minor 3rd to actual pitch F
as is
Slide
Sl.
P
1½
(wah wah off)
Play 3 times
J
H
A
E open
trem.

ALEX LIFESON

Continued from page 50



Bob Leafe

GUITAR: So the best mix of keys and guitars is on **Moving Pictures?**

ALEX: Thus far. I'm not putting **Signals** down, the material is quite good and generally the production is good. We just tried something different. Ultimately, if we keep trying different things we'll be happy no matter what the results.

GUITAR: Do you have to stop yourself from repeating something from the past?

ALEX: You don't have to stop yourself but it's always in the forefront of your mind that you don't want to repeat yourself. After making 12 records it's hard not to.

GUITAR: Do you ever want to record a song just to totally rock out on the guitar?

ALEX: At this point, no. I'm making an effort to change my thinking about the way I want to do solos and play the guitar in general. Like I said earlier, I want to take up more space and be more harmonic in my approach. With my soloing I want to take up more room with less frequency of notes. I want to be more careful with my note selection. I feel like I've come out of that play as fast as you can age. **Signals** was the turning point for that. I'd like to pursue it further and maybe combine more chordal solos than strictly individual notes.

GUITAR: I know you would love to forget the first live Rush album. How do you feel about **Exit?**

ALEX: Live albums are always a difficult thing. It's hard to get excited about them. In terms of a live recording it's very good. I'm happy with it in that respect. As an example of our show it's not as good as it could have been or possibly should have been. Live albums give us some breathing space to cleanse ourselves and start on something fresh and new. When we were in the studio doing **Exit,** Geddy and I were in another studio working on *Digital Man* and *Subdivisions* for **Signals.** We were already geared up for another record. I think that had something to do with the fact that we don't go crazy over live records. I don't know if you'll ever hear another live album from Rush. We enjoy the studio recordings much more than we do the live ones.

GUITAR: Do you enjoy the studio more than the stage?

ALEX: I enjoy playing live, but I don't enjoy touring as much as I used to. After so many years you do get tired and the cliches about being in a different hotel every night do apply. We all have families and being away sort of irks you. There is a whole set of rules and points of satisfaction that you get in both situations. I enjoy both, especially if you're well prepared. For this new record we allotted more time than usual so we were in very good shape.

GUITAR: Do you like to develop songs from working with demo tapes?

ALEX: Yes, I have a 16-track studio at home. We bring an Otari up north with us. Once we get the songs in pretty good shape we put them down on that, overdubbing vocals and keyboards.

GUITAR: Are you involved in the whole process or just your parts in the songs?

ALEX: We're all there for the duration.

GUITAR: Do you spend time experimenting with the new effects as they come out?

ALEX: I've always done that. My array of effects is pretty complete but I'm always finding new things you can do. My latest additions are a Korg DDL and a Noise Gate. I use the same Marshall stack, but I'm trying out the Carvin Twin 12's. I'm also checking out the Roland Computerized Present Effects. I've spent a great deal of time working with my effects so I'm happy with them.

Continued on page 94

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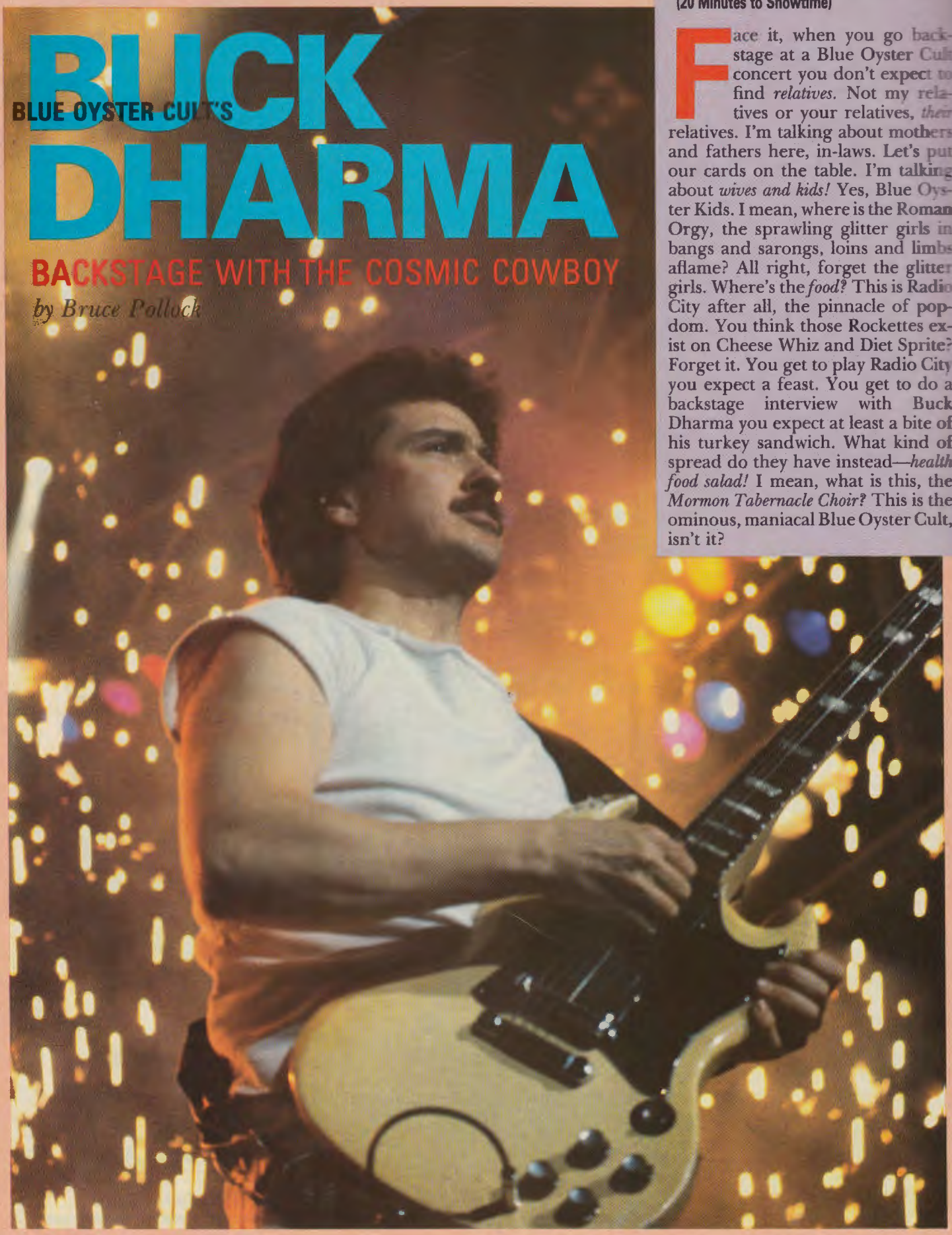
BLUE OYSTER CULT'S BUCK DHARMA

BACKSTAGE WITH THE COSMIC COWBOY

by Bruce Pollock



Backstage, Radio City Music Hall, N.Y. (20 Minutes to Showtime)

Face it, when you go backstage at a Blue Oyster Cult concert you don't expect to find *relatives.* Not my relatives or your relatives, *their* relatives. I'm talking about mothers and fathers here, in-laws. Let's put our cards on the table. I'm talking about *wives and kids!* Yes, Blue Oyster Kids. I mean, where is the Roman Orgy, the sprawling glitter girls in bangs and sarongs, loins and limbs aflame? All right, forget the glitter girls. Where's the *food?* This is Radio City after all, the pinnacle of popdom. You think those Rockettes exist on Cheese Whiz and Diet Sprite? Forget it. You get to play Radio City you expect a feast. You get to do a backstage interview with Buck Dharma you expect at least a bite of his turkey sandwich. What kind of spread do they have instead—*health food salad!* I mean, what is this, the *Mormon Tabernacle Choir?* This is the ominous, maniacal Blue Oyster Cult, isn't it?

Is it? Let's go to the **GUITAR** Reference Library. Starting out as the Soft White Underbelly, they inspired this rather cryptic comment from Lillian Roxon in her legendary **Rock Encyclopedia:** "After a year of retreat on Long Island for some cautious musical simmering, Soft White Underbelly, a rock group with mysterious Near Eastern overtones, emerged in 1969 with a record contract and a mildly mystical underground reputation."

Weird scenes, huh? You envision Peter Lorre on guitar, Humphrey Bogart singing lead. But why were they in retreat if they hadn't even started yet? And, of course, everything was mysteriously Near Eastern in 1969.

Then, in an article published only in Japan, we learn from John Stix that the band was known as the Stalk Forest in 1972 and was reduced to playing high school dances. What's so mildly mystical about that? Yet, that same year their debut album came out, under the Blue Oyster Cult name. The critics loved them. They remained a critics' band throughout the 70s, even treated favorably by the notorious **The Rolling Stone Record Guide,** which had this to say about that debut disc: "What really made it magnetic was the hook-laden music with its parade of Buck Dharma's multilayered guitars and the Cult's reputation as a neo-fascist, vampirish New York band that would sooner suck your blood than take your money."

Strange. In the space of three lean years they'd gone from Near Eastern to neo-fascist, from mystical to vampirish. What gives? Could it have been the bottom line image-mongering of the rock 'n' roll corporate jungle at work? "We got enough mystics—Donovan, Cat Stevens, Carole King. What we need, Jake, is vampires. All we got right now is Alice Cooper." Or was it merely New York living? Couple of years on the street would transform any honorable mystic into a raving vampire, right?

More likely it was the insidious influence of R. Meltzer behind the early maneuverings of the Cult. On the heels of his almost universally dismissed and now all-but forgotten, but highly influential magnum opus, **The Aesthetics of Rock,** a work of stupendous gibberish and a couple of wonderful sentences (space prevents me from excerpting the book here in its entirety), Meltzer somehow convinced the Cult to perform his demented lyrics. It was the rock 'n' roll dream, of course, that infects all such word-heavy rock critics, to climb up that pop chart, rung by rung, over the writhing feverish bodies of glitter girls, loins and limbs aflame, to taste the backstage turkey sandwiches of immortality. Meltzer had it bad. But that didn't mean the Cult had to humor him.

But the Cult soon became known for such adventurous bohemian alliances. It must have been about that time or sometime later—or before—that they got connected with Patty Smith, the New York poetess, who was whirling around town in those days, bats on each shoulder, ranting and chanting her manic mystical poetry to anyone who would listen. Who told the Cult to listen? Must have been Sandy Pearlman, their mentor and manager, about whom little is known. Pearlman and Meltzer and Smith and the New York literati all had the last laugh, however, when *(Don't Fear) The Reaper* cracked the charts in 1976, possibly the most gruesome ditty ever to make a jukebox. But was it any more gruesome than *Teen Angel?* It is a question I leave for rock philosophers like R. Meltzer to decide.

So, the Cult rolled on. There was laughing again in '82, when Dharma and Meltzer teamed up on *Burnin' for You.* But the Cult proved not to be a singles band—no Journey-sized hot streaks in their karma. They released the albums, row by row, like crosses in Flanders Fields, just laying there. Some may have gone gold. Meanwhile, Patty Smith got herself published, got a record deal, a huge hit, a husband and a baby. R. Meltzer got a radio show. Still, the Cult rolled on, hanging in, hoping to luck out. The drummer left and they replaced him with the guy who used to be their lighting designer. After years and years on that same road, hauling out the motorcycle one more time, shooting up the laser lights and detonating the smoke bombs, what started out perhaps as the ultimate sixties dormitory joke, had turned eleven—no, closer to *seventeen*—years later into the unthinkable—a career. Buck Dharma, consummate guitarist though he is, is several days a week the ex-Chemical Engineering major Donald Roeser, living in the country like your average suburban dentist.

"I don't jam too much when I'm off the road," says Buck, 10 minutes before showtime. "There are some people who live, breathe and smoke guitar 24 hours a day. I'm not one of those." While he talks he glances around at the milling crowd of friends, relatives, business associates. In his hands he idly warms up on a Fender Strat.

"This is my favorite guitar," he says. "Even though it's got EMG pickups and a Floyd Rose it still plays like a Fender. I think Fender necks and bodies, no matter what the electronics are, are a little cleaner. I've also got a guitar made by Juliano Ballestro, which is my main Gibson type axe. He made them on a limited production basis; I don't know if he's making them at all anymore. I met him by having him do some neck work for me. I played one of his guitars and I liked it. His Vulcan has two humbuckers, mahogany body; the neck radius and neck type are very similar to Gibson construction. I like it for heavy chording. It's a little more articulate. You can lay in thicker chord shapes and there's less inner modulation of the notes." Dharma would rather warm up on an acoustic guitar. "It's like swinging a bat with a weight on it," he says. "There are things I'm required to play that I can't really play until I warm up."

Because he likes his free time when the Cult are off the road, and because the Cult have been off the road so much of late (prior to the latest album/tour they'd been home or in the studio for 15 of the last 18 months), it takes him a while to find his groove on the road. "It's about three weeks before I feel like a guitar player again," he says. "There's something about touring heavily that's beneficial to the development of technique and the maintenance of peak facility." Before they go on the road, BOC don't spend a lot of time rehearsing. "We rehearse for the record; we don't rehearse for the road. We have the tunes pretty well down by the time they're re-

Continued on page 69

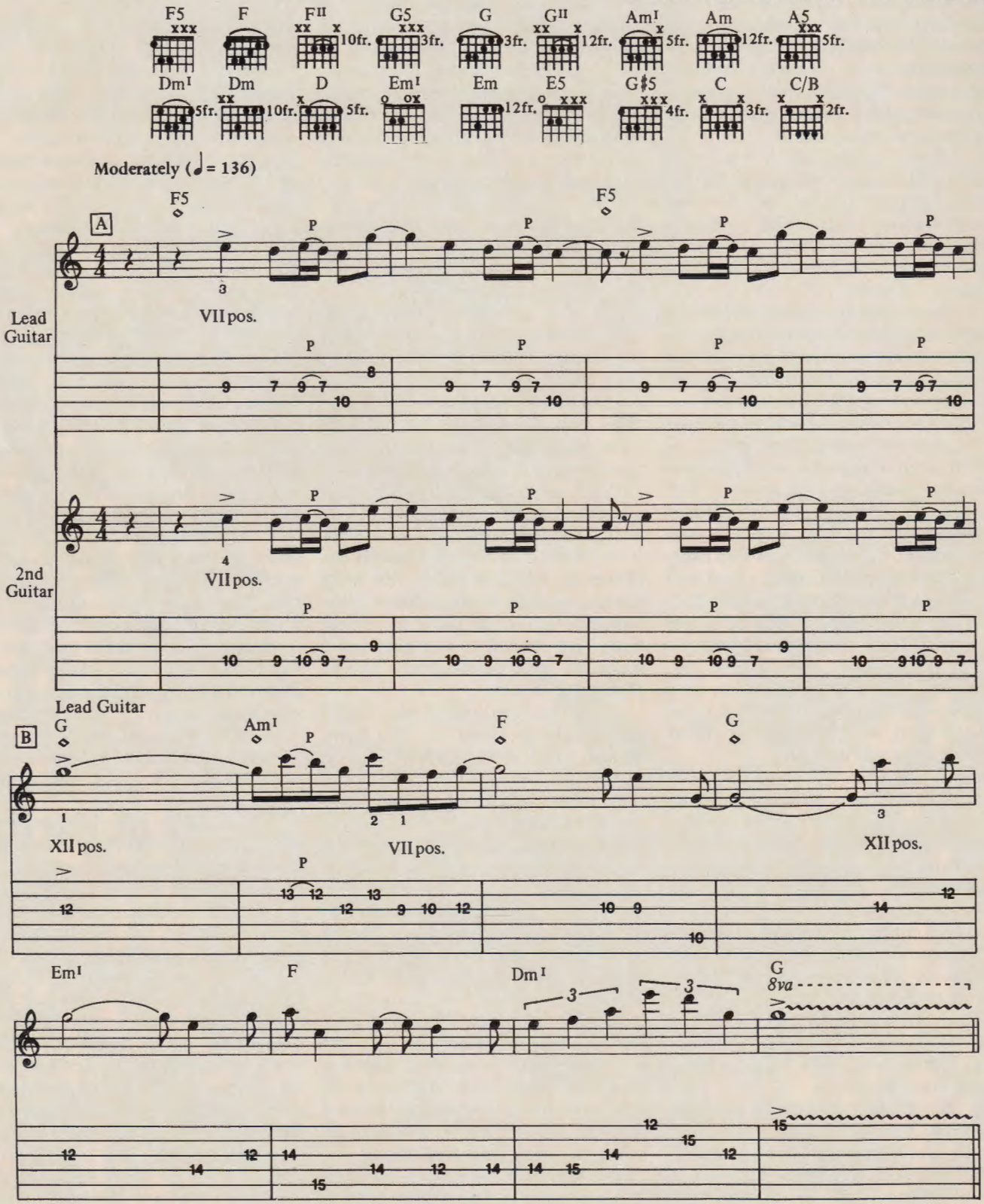
Tablature Explanation see pg. 92

BURNIN' FOR YOU

As recorded by Blue Oyster Cult

(From the album FIRE OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN/Columbia FC 37389)

Words and Music by
Donald Roeser and Richard Meltzer



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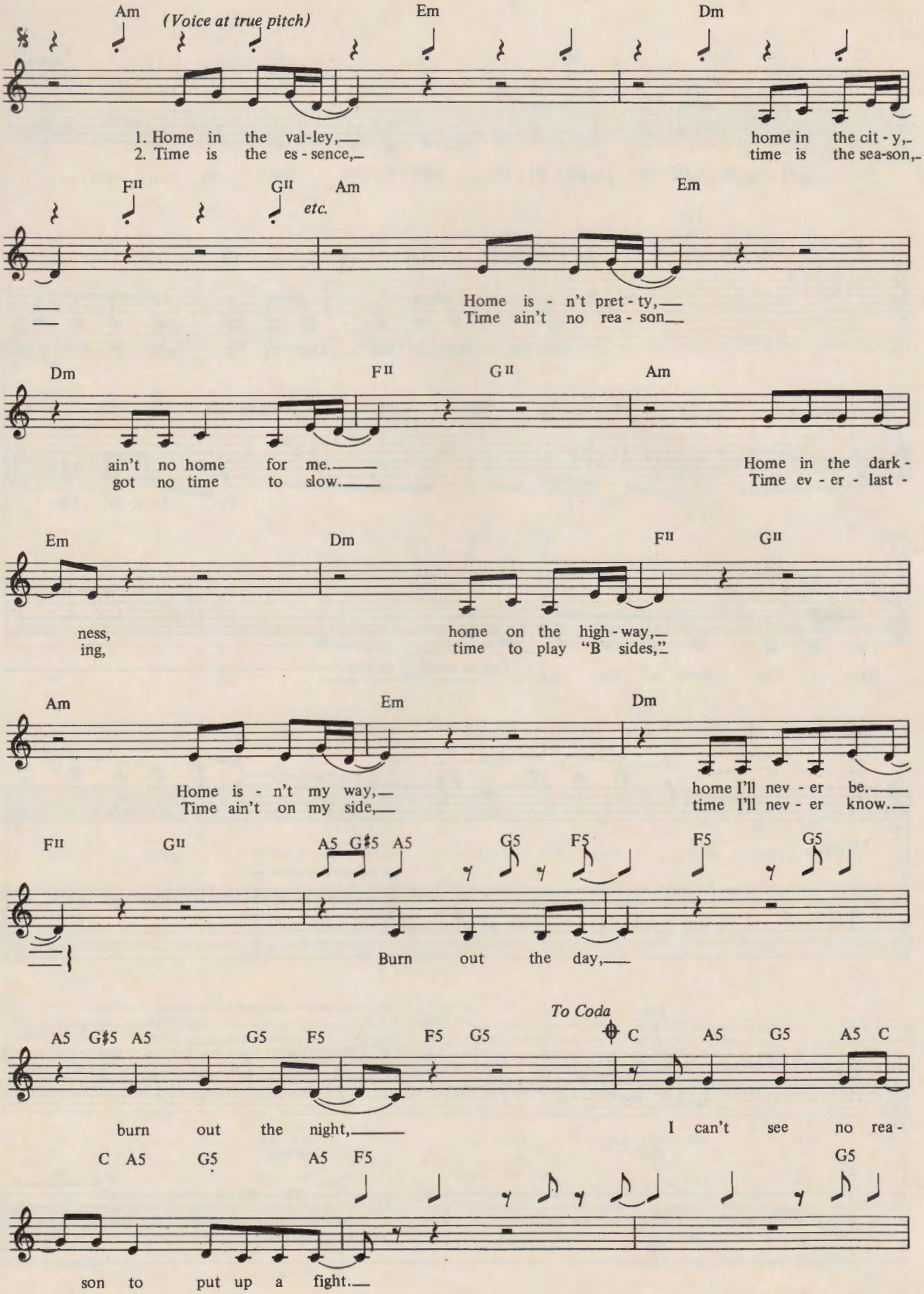
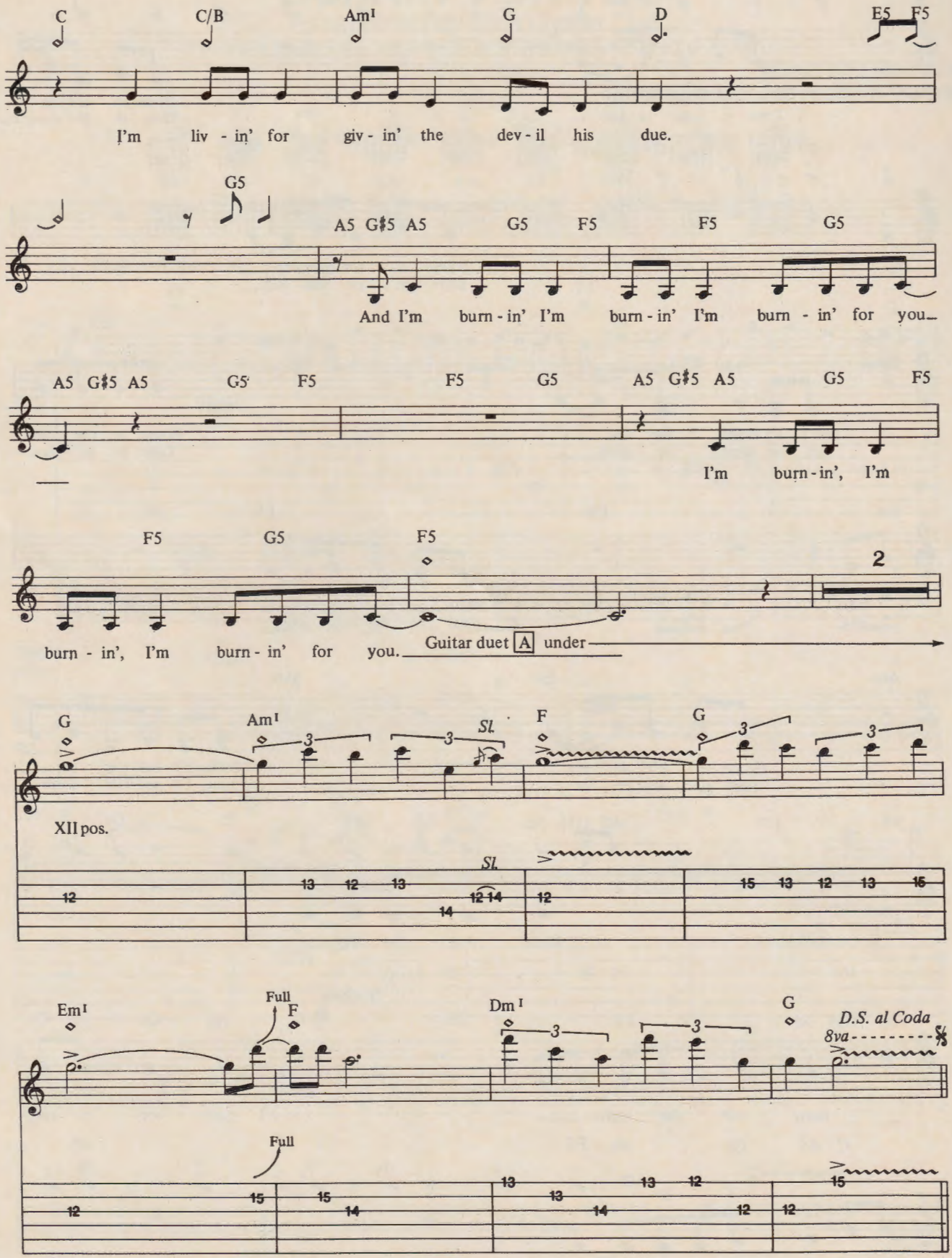
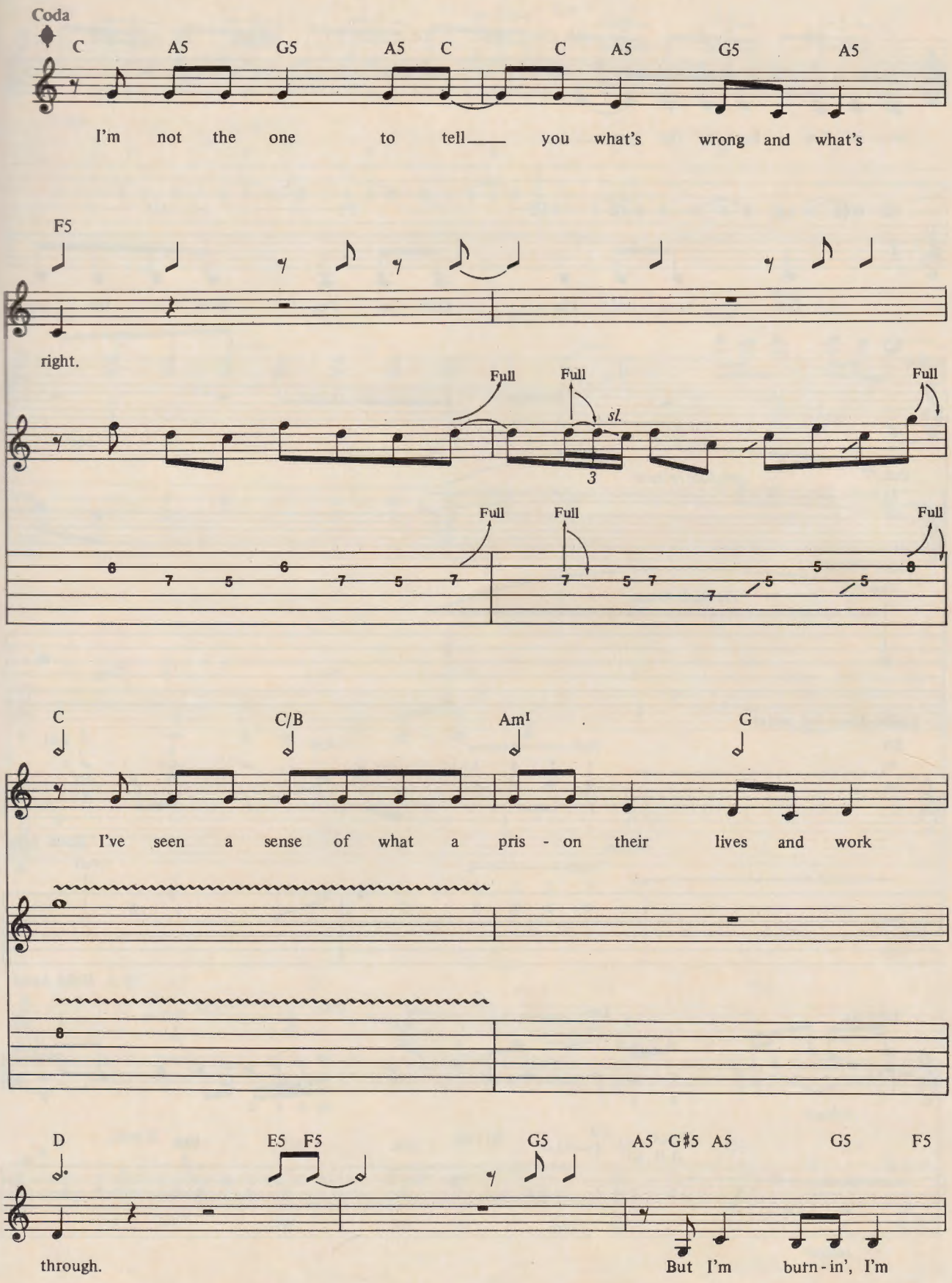
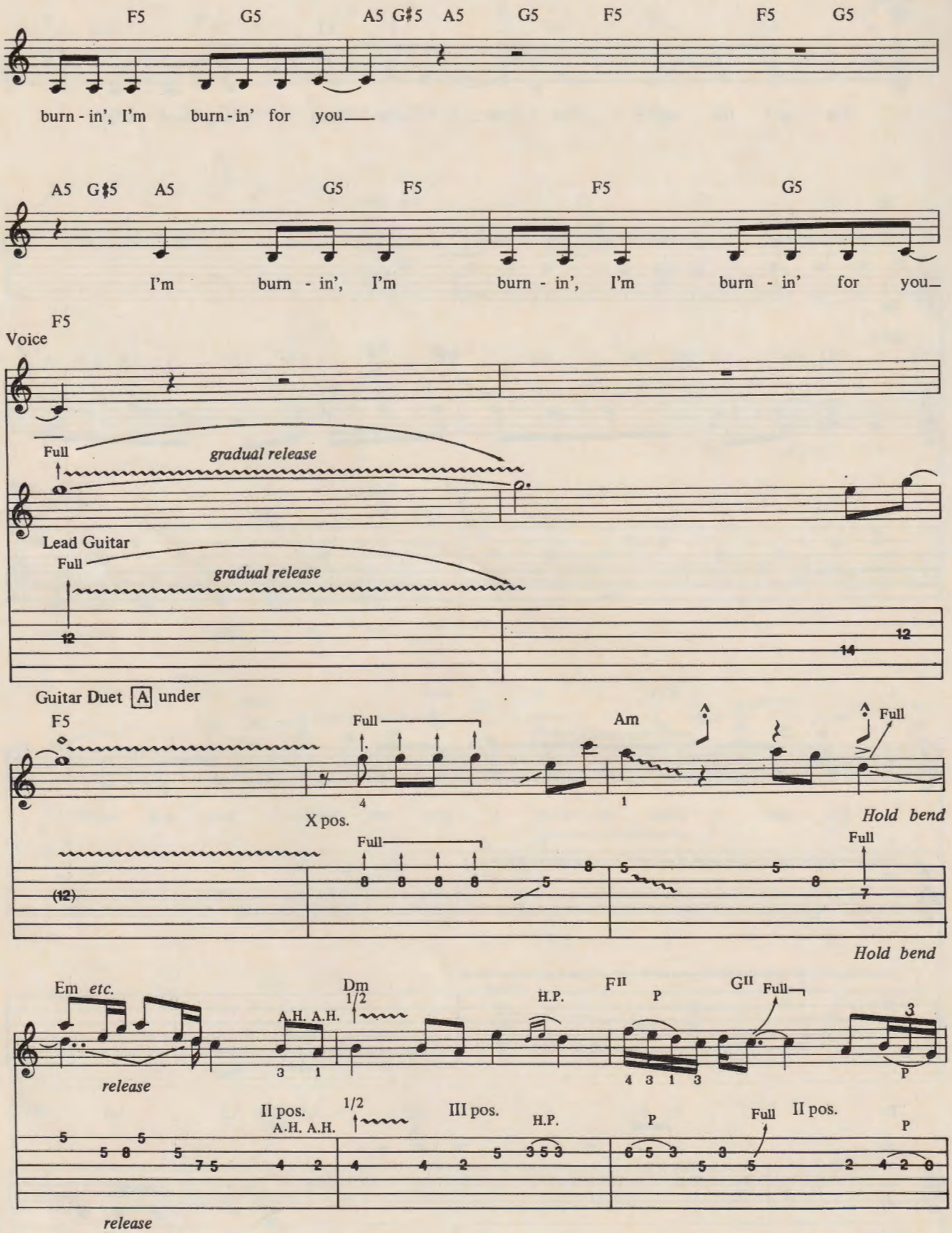
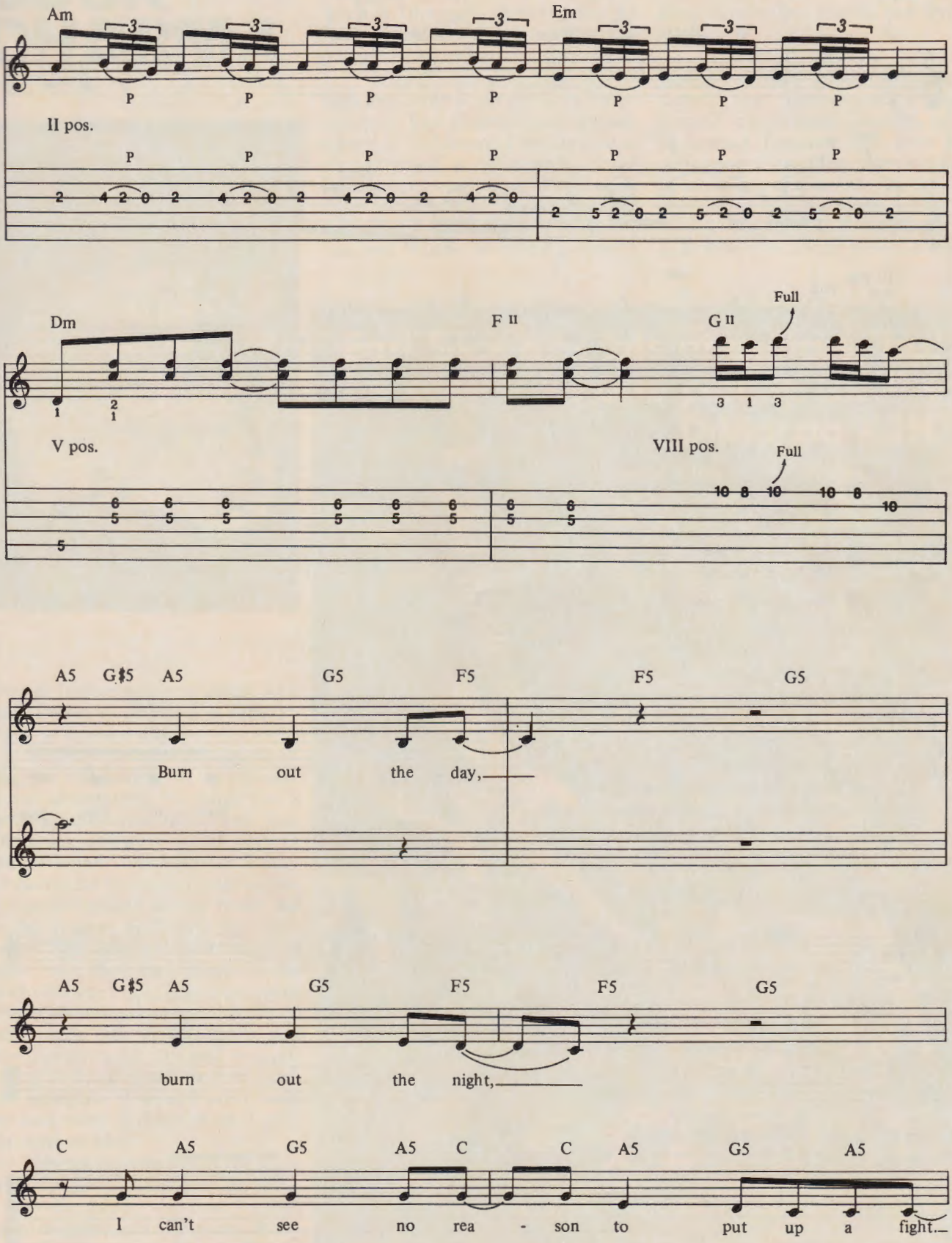
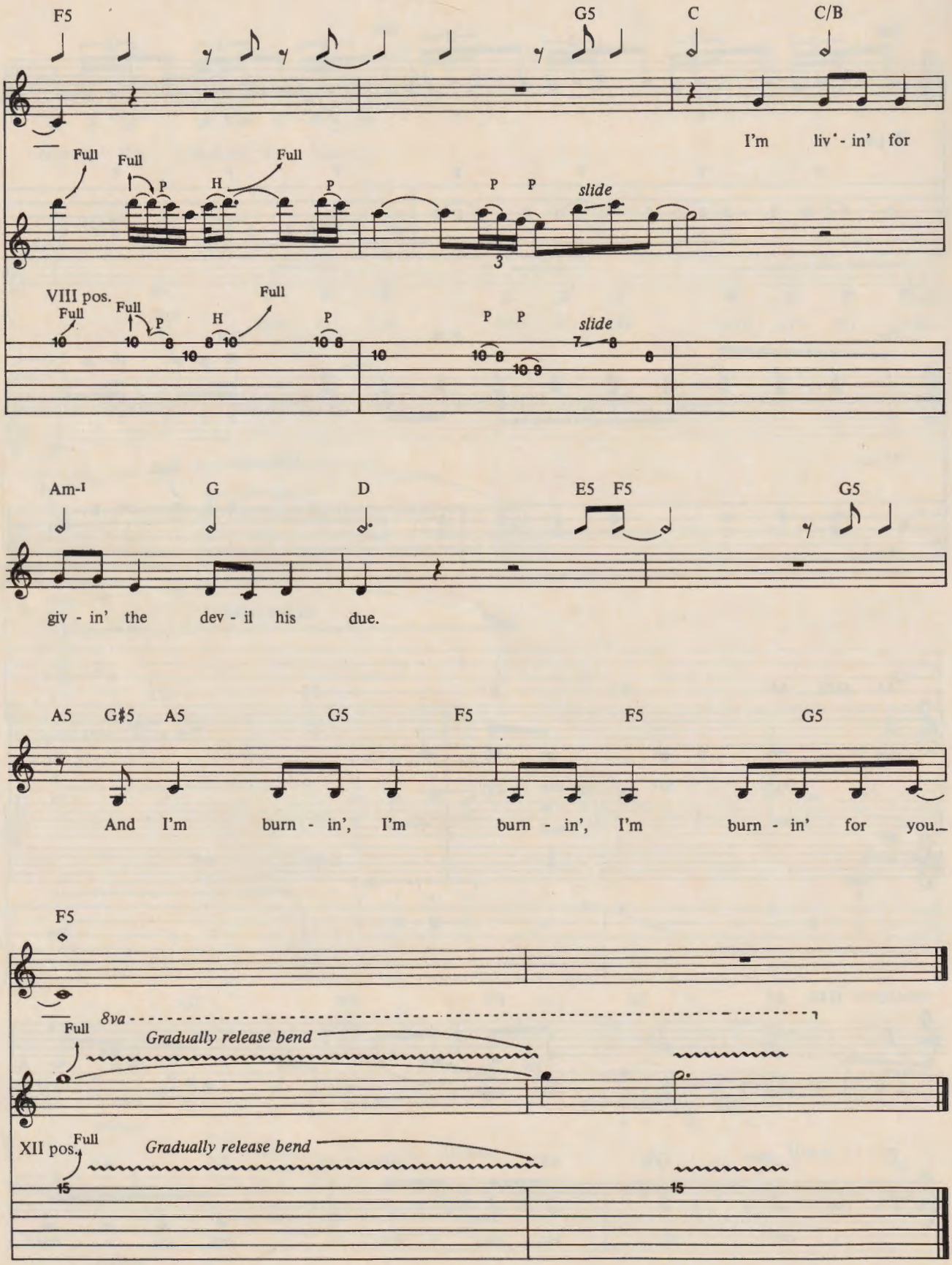

Am
(Voice at true pitch)
Em
Dm
1. Home in the val-ley,
2. Time is the es-sence,
home in the cit-y,
time is the sea-son,
F II
G II
Am
etc.
Em
Home is - n't pret-ty,
Time ain't no rea-son
Dm
F II
G II
Am
ain't no home for me.
got no time to slow.
Home in the dark-
Time ev-er-last-
Em
Dm
F II
G II
ness,
ing,
home on the high-way,
time to play "B sides,"
Am
Em
Dm
Home is - n't my way,
Time ain't on my side,
home I'll nev-er be.
time I'll nev-er know.
F II
G II
A5 G♯5 A5
G5 F5
F5 G5
Burn out the day,
To Coda
A5 G♯5 A5
G5 F5
F5 G5
C A5 G5 A5 C
burn out the night,
I can't see no rea-
C A5 G5 A5 F5
G5
son to put up a fight.


C C/B Am I G D E5 F5
I'm liv - in' for giv - in' the dev - il his due.
G5 A5 G♯5 A5 G5 F5 F5 G5
And I'm burn - in' I'm burn - in' I'm burn - in' for you
A5 G♯5 A5 G5 F5 F5 G5 A5 G♯5 A5 G5 F5
I'm burn - in', I'm
F5 G5 F5 2
burn - in', I'm burn - in' for you. Guitar duet A under
G Am I Sl. F G
XII pos.
Sl.
Em I Full F Dm I G D.S. al Coda
8va
Full


Coda
C A5 G5 A5 C C A5 G5 A5
I'm not the one to tell you what's wrong and what's
F5
right.
Full Full Full
sl.
3
Full Full Full
C C/B Am7 G
I've seen a sense of what a pris - on their lives and work
D E5 F5 G5 A5 G#5 A5 G5 F5
through.
But I'm burn - in', I'm


F5 G5 A5 G♯5 A5 G5 F5 F5 G5
burn - in', I'm burn - in' for you
A5 G♯5 A5 G5 F5 F5 G5
I'm burn - in', I'm burn - in', I'm burn - in' for you
Voice
F5
Full
gradual release
Lead Guitar
Full
gradual release
12
14
12
Guitar Duet A under
F5
Full
Am
Full
4
1
Hold bend
X pos.
Full
Full
(12)
8 8 8 8 5 8 5 5 8 7
Hold bend
Em etc.
release
Dm
1/2
A.H. A.H.
3 1
H.P.
F II
P
4 3 1 3
G II
Full
3
P
II pos.
A.H. A.H.
1/2
III pos.
H.P.
P
Full
II pos.
P
5 5 8 5 5 7 5 4 2 4 4 2 5 3 5 3 6 5 3 5 3 5 2 4 2 0
release


Am
Em
II pos.
Dm
F II
G II
Full
V pos.
VIII pos.
Full
A5 G♯5 A5 G5 F5 F5 G5
Burn out the day,
A5 G♯5 A5 G5 F5 F5 G5
burn out the night,
C A5 G5 A5 C C A5 G5 A5
I can't see no rea - son to put up a fight.



Guitar duet [A] under; repeat and fade

BUCK DHARMA

Continued from page 61

Steve Mandel

corded. Before doing an album we'll have a week of production rehearsals, 8-10 hours a day."

Despite this casual approach, Dharma still finds a lot of pleasure in his instrument. "I think I'm a better guitarist now than I ever was. There are definitely nights where I just personally feel it's great. I have the particular facility, on those nights, to transfer what's in the brain out to the fingers and onto the fretboard. That quotient varies night to night, but your fans know it, the ones who are really into you. After a night when you know you've played well, you'll talk to somebody and they'll reinforce it. It's still very satisfying to hear myself and to think I'm articulate. I would say I have my own style; I don't think I play like anyone else.

"My roots are probably the same as a lot of people who grew up when I did—the blues, the first English wave of guitarists: Clapton, Beck. Jerry Garcia was an influence on me. The Soft White Underbelly was modeled on the West Coast acid rock bands. In a way we're still an underground group." Of the old guard, Beck is Dharma's favorite. But he had some kind words for Stevie Ray Vaughan, an old guard throwback.

"It's refreshing to hear a style that gets away from the Van Halen and post Van Halen/Randy Rhoads school of technique. I haven't felt at all compelled to incorporate those licks into my repertoire, even though I have learned how to play the basic style. But I don't use it because it's not me. What I'm finding when I listen to a lot of guitarists who have that technique is that they're playing a lot of notes but they're not saying a lot.

"I meet 16-year-old kids who just have that whole vocabulary down," he commented. Dharma himself, the Cosmic Cowboy, while eschewing hammer-ons, does not walk away from sheer pyrotechnics. "I admire taste in guitar players and at other times I think playing as fast as you can, or doing something totally flashy is a real move. I think

good guitarists are criticized on the basis of not showing enough taste if they're always playing a million miles an hour. And the ones who are not tremendous technicians defend themselves by saying they try to play tastier. I think a guy like Billy Gibbons is a good balance between speed and taste.

"When I play I like to take a lot of chances. I might go for a run and hit a clunker. I don't want to get inhibited to the point where I don't want to try and play something because I might make a mistake. That's a philosophy of mine. It's OK to hit a clunker."

These days songwriting is taking up more and more of the guitarist's energy. He put out a solo album, which he characterized as pop. "That's mainly because of my songwriting style. Also, the way I sing channels me in that direction, because I'm not really suited to raunchy, screaming rock vocals." Some of his best songwriting licks have come by accident. "Sometimes the licks are generated when I'm on the road. Often it happens during a solo at soundcheck. I just tape them on a small cassette, catalogue them and file them away. I'm thinking of getting a cassette deck in my rack and just have it patched in, because I have a hard time remembering what cool lick I played, or even a progression. I can even notate it and when I go back to it, it doesn't sound as cool as it did the first time."

After so many years on the circuit doling out the licks in one blue mist or another, through smokebomb after smokebomb, it's amazing that anything sounds as good to Dharma as it did the first time. For Blue Oyster Cult, the first time, first major tour, was with Alice Cooper. "We opened for Alice on the Killer tour," Dharma reminisces, just seconds before showtime. "It was the best show they ever did. I didn't see any of the earlier ones, but I saw all the others after that, and I didn't like any of them any better. I just didn't like the hired hands he put together after that original band fell apart."

Thus, Blue Oyster Cult, a dozen years of records later, is still in the trenches of the underground—with the wives and kids and the health salads packed away in the suburbs. Like I said, weird.

Dharma knows it's weird, too, especially with video now in the mix—MTV's Mark Goodman and his lovely wife, Carol Miller, the New York deejay, were in the backstage wings ogling the concert, perhaps deciding the viability of the Cult for a new generation, one that's never heard of R. Meltzer.

"Video has created a lot of one-shot wonders," says Buck Dharma, trying to remain calm. "That's the way it sort of used to be in rock. But a lot of the groups that sell a lot of records can't draw flies live." He heads onstage.

"The game is changing all the time." ■

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REGIONAL REPORTS

In November, 1983 I saw a "Battle of the Bands" contest at a place called The Hitchin' Post in Ottawa, Ohio. There I was witness to the debut of a bright new band named Vision, all of whom are under 18. When they started to play all hell broke loose. These kids were fantastic. Even though they had very little stage experience, their energy and enthusiasm was endless! They were also very, very talented. When the singer made the introductions, I grabbed a napkin and a pen and jotted down their names for future reference:

Guitars: Scott Cres
Bill Irving
Drums: Brian Cres
Bass: ?
Keyboards: Kenny Han
Vocals: Judy Kid

The question mark by the bass player's position refers to the fact that their bass player couldn't play because of a broken arm. In my opinion, after seeing Vision play, the future of rock and roll is in capable hands.

—J.A. Lucas
Newport, Ohio

ETC.

Michael Schenker is the finest guitarist to come out in this decade—and coming from a Seattlite (home of our own Jimi Hendrix) that's a compliment. Anyone getting a chance to see his Built to Destroy world tour, don't miss it! I know in my bones this will be Michael's year coming up. Anyone interested in information, photos, etc. can write:

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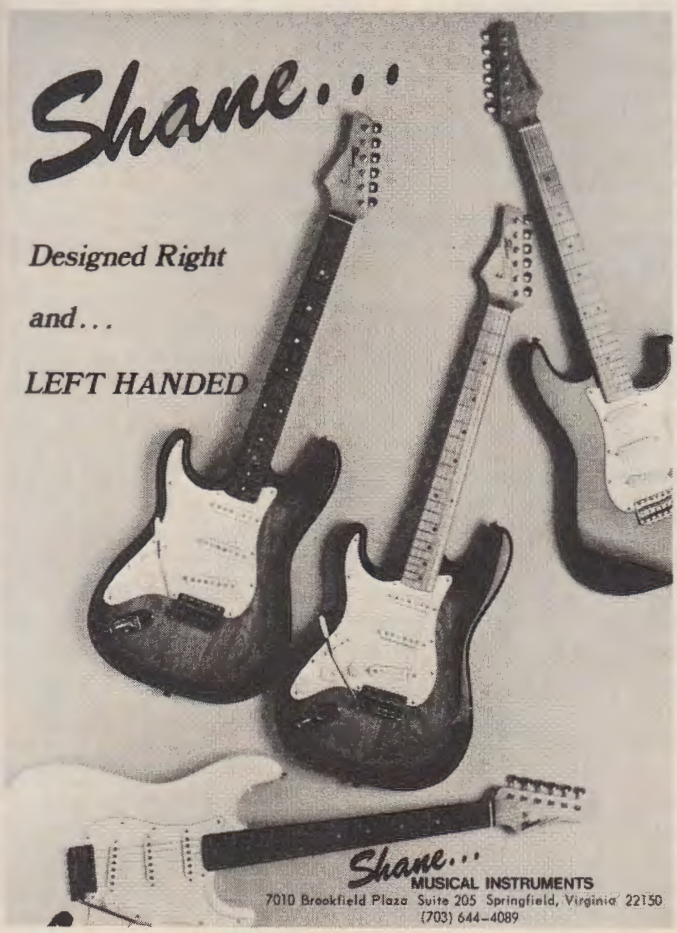

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On Another Note

By Alan H. Siegel

Alan H. Siegel is author of ***BREAKIN' IN TO THE MUSIC BUSINESS.***

When Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick wrote ***Fiddler on the Roof*** the lament:

"Matchmaker, matchmaker,
Make me a match,
Find me a find,
Catch me a catch."

was ascribed to a young woman yearning for a mate. It can, without too much difficulty, be applied to the beginning performing artist's quest for a manager. The most frequently asked question I encounter (after "How do I get a record deal?" and "How do I get my songs published?") is, "How do I get a manager?"

The use of the ***Fiddler*** lyric is more appropriate than you may think. Few relationships rival marriage more closely than does the artist-manager relationship. In the formative years of an artist's career there is no one he or she will be closer to, be more intimate with, confide in more, rely upon more, blame more, or abuse more, and if fortunate, be more indebted to, than his or her manager.

Let's make sure we're talking about the same thing. There are essentially three kinds of managers you may come into contact with in the course of your career. We're not concerned with two of them at this time so let's dispose of them. A "road manager" is an employee of the artist whose function it is to coordinate everything associated with the artist's personal appearances. His job is to worry about getting to and from the gig, setting up the equipment, the hotel reservations, security, etc. He worries about (and hopefully "handles") these things so, at least theoretically, the artist doesn't have to! The other kind of manager we are not interested in right now, although hopefully you will be interested in him later on in your career, is the "business manager." The business manager's function is to structure and manage your financial empire. Obviously, one must create a financial empire before his services are needed, so lets concentrate on the kind of manager who will help you create that empire . . . the "personal manager."

The personal manager is the person charged with the responsibility for moulding and overseeing an artist's professional and artistic career . . . the Henry Higgins to your Liza! Consequently he, or she, can be your salvation or destruction.

When should you acquire a manager? You should acquire a manager as soon as you find a good one who wants to manage you. The two key words are **good** and **wants.** When a manager wants to manage you, you will know it—he'll come a courtin'. Incidentally, this also answers the first question posed above, "How do I get a manager?" In most instances you will reach a point when prospective managers begin to notice, and track your career. When the prospective manager believes that with his guidance you (and he) can become successful, rich and famous he will make his intentions known. Of course this does not mean that you cannot try to initiate the contact and make a manager you think you may want, aware of your unique talent.

How do you know if a manager is "good"? Well, if he has created two or three superstars it's a pretty good indication that he's learned his trade. These are the "heavy hitters" of the management profession. If you are to acquire management early in your career it is unlikely that you will start off with one of these supermanagers. They have learned just how demanding artists are of their managers, both emotionally and with respect to their time. They concentrate on their superacts and won't be available to you until your career is about to soar. There just aren't enough supermanagers to go around.

Another category of manager, the soft underbelly of the management profession, is the would-be manager. They call themselves "managers" (anyone can, you know; there are no educational or licensing prerequisites) but know little or nothing about the entertainment industry other than a few buzz words they use to turn on unsuspecting and inexperienced artists.

By far the most numerous of managers, are those who work at their profession, gather experience and knowledge, work hard to develop their artists, but who, for one reason or another, have not yet broken a "monster" act. It is from their ranks that the supermanagers of tomorrow, and in all likelihood, your first manager will emerge.

There is an old aviation axiom: "There are old pilots and there are bold pilots, but there are no old bold pilots." Similarly, there are dumb managers and there are great managers, but there are no dumb great managers. Hence, if I had to propound one rule for you to follow in selecting a manager it would be the following: **If you harbor a suspicion that you are smarter, brighter, or more intelligent than he is, look elsewhere.** If you ignore this rule your manager will not be able to lead, and you will not be able to follow.

In a future column we will explore the technical nature of the artist-manager relationship, and the contracts that reflect that relationship. Until then . . . be careful out there! ■

Send your Guitar Questions To

GUITAR QUESTIONS

BY BARRY LIPMAN

PO Box 1490, Port Chester, New York 10573

Barry Lipman builds and repairs guitars at his shop in Scarsdale, N. Y. He has worked on guitars for Al DiMeola, Bob Mayo and Tom "T-Bone" Wolk.

Question: *Where is the best place to attach a strap to an acoustic guitar? Can I do it myself?*—Joe Schwarzbauer of St. Louis, MO

Answer: An acoustic guitar's strap should be attached to strap-pins located at the tail and the heel. These strap-pins are usually held in place by screws that should thread directly into the wood of the tail-block and neck-block. Sometimes a tapered plastic, wooden or ivory end-pin may be set directly into the tail-block, secured by friction with the help of a little white glue.

As many steel-string guitars come with only an end-pin, it is a very common job to install a strap-pin on the heel. I prefer to install the strap-pin on the surface directly opposite the fretboard, as this is usually the best grain for screw-threads. But many people prefer the side of the heel, or even the side of the body close to the heel. In any event, it is important to be sure that the screw-threads will enter either the neck-block or the heel itself, and they must be surrounded by at least a half an inch of wood on either side for their entire depth.

The installation procedure is simple. To help prevent the drill from slipping, you first poke a small hole or depression, using an awl or any other sharply pointed object, at the location you wish the strap-pin to be. You can then drill a hole the exact size of the screw, measured between, not on, its threads. The hole should be deeper than the screw by ⅛ to ¼ of an inch; a little masking tape on the drill-bit can indicate the correct depth. If any of the unthreaded portion of the screw will enter the wood, you must widen the top of the hole to accommodate it. A little wax or Ivory soap in the hole will help ease the screw in. I recommend the use of a leather or felt washer to protect the finish, and if the installation is on a curved surface, it is good practice to file the bottom of the strap-pin to fit.

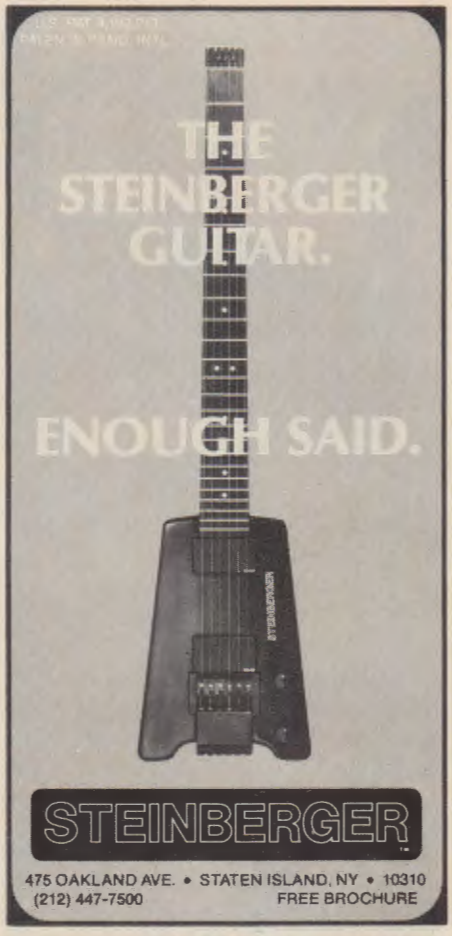
It is definitely not a good idea to affix a strap to the peg-head, as the sideways stresses created tend to weaken the neck-to-body joint. Although this joint is obviously quite strong, it is primarily designed to withstand the straight and steady pull of the strings. Intermittent forces, particularly sideways or backwards, can lead to premature failure.

Question: *How can you go about scalloping a fretboard and would it make it difficult to play in tune?*—Ed Beasley Jr.

Answer: Scalloping fretboards is not a job for the average do-it-yourselfer. Although most necks are strong enough to deal with at least the lighter gauges of strings after scalloping, and most fretboards are thick enough to allow the modification, a scalloping job can get quite involved.

I use a half-round and a round rasp, and clean up with several grades of sandpaper on variously curved sanding-sticks. Unless you are content to do without them, you will probably need to inlay a new set of position markers, an additional job in itself. A grind-and-polish may then be required to restore the frets to playable condition.

Playing on a scalloped board is not as strange an experience as you would think. You will probably not play any more out of tune than you would on a guitar with large frets; in fact, a scalloped fingerboard can be considered an exaggerated jumbo-fretwire set-up. It is possible to bend one or more notes within a chord, although it is harder to bend by pushing down than you might expect. However, it is much easier to bend notes using normal technique because the fretboard does not interfere with your fingers grabbing the strings and because it is much easier to get under the strings ahead of your finger(s) as you bend. ■



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Amps

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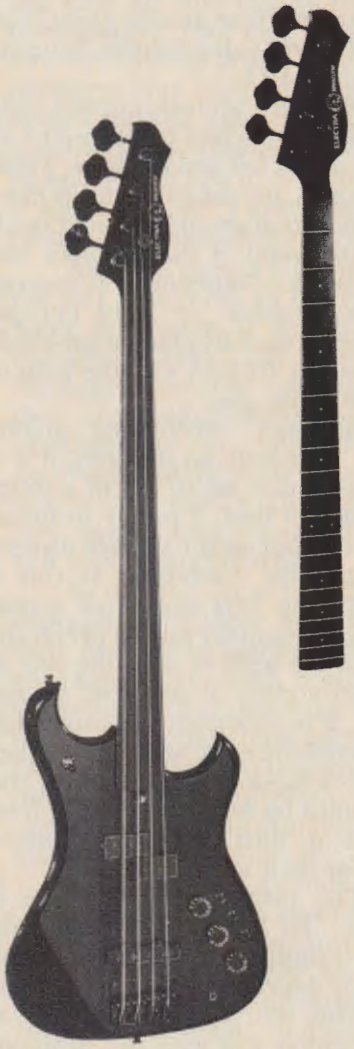


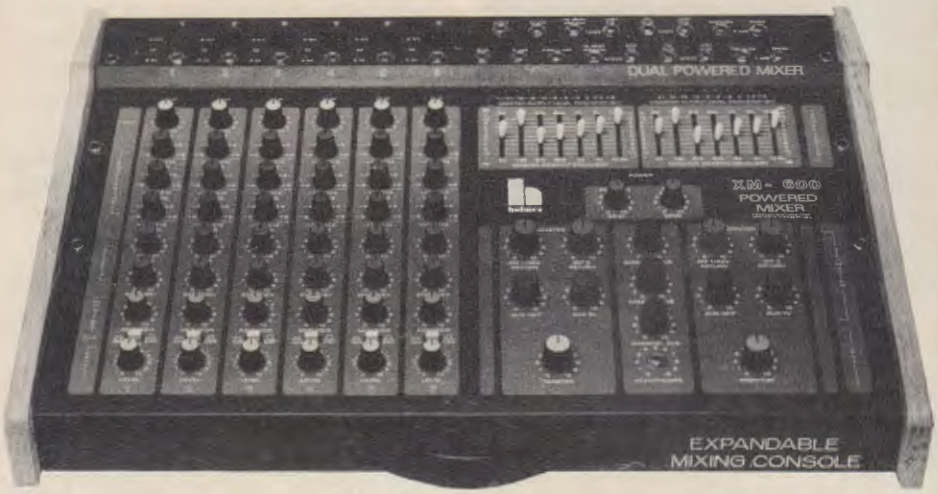
The X695JB Dual Concept bass guitar, just introduced to the Electra Westone line, comes with two necks: a fretted neck and a fretless neck that can be interchanged for bass players who want to move from one style to another. The necks detach by simply loosening four allen nuts. The case for the X695JB is especially designed to hold both necks. The suggested list price is $649.50.

St. Louis Music Supply Company
1400 Ferguson Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63133

Guitar Pedal

Boss unleashes its HM-2 Heavy Metal distortion pedal, with a unique two-part color control for advanced frequency effects. The Normal/Effects footswitch makes a smooth and silent transition between dry and distortion sounds. A convenient normal/effect indicator light tells you when the effect is on, and also serves as a Battery Check indicator. The HM-2 runs on a single 9V battery or can be powered by an AC adaptor. The suggested retail price is $99.50.

RolandCorp US
7200 Dominion Circle
Los Angeles, CA 90040



Mixers

The Holmes Corporation introduces its latest line of mixing consoles. The XM-Series, available as single or dual powered units, consists of 6-, 9- and 12-channel mono consoles featuring 3 bands of EQ for each channel, 2 effects loops, 3-way headphone cueing, input sensitivities, and dual 7-band main/monitor graphic equalizers. The XM Series boards also feature 10-step LED Output Indicators for both the main and monitor section and individual channel clip lights. Suggested retail prices for these mixers range from $799 to $1450.

Holmes Corp. a division of:
The On-Site Music Group
3000 Marcus Avenue
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The V220 Tremolo is Carvin's answer for the serious rock 'n' roll guitarist. It offers a new radical shape for playing comfort. The V220 comes with one standard M22 pickup in the neck position and a M22SD at the bridge. Dual-to-single coil switching is also used to attain the thin or fat sound. A brass nut is standard and the tuning keys are Schaller Mini's. The V220 is available in 5 durable polyurethane colors and is priced at $549.00 with Kahler tremolo or $399.00 with a standard bridge.

Carvin Products
1155 Industrial Avenue
Escondido, CA 92025

NEW PRODUCTS

THE VINYL SCORE

BUZZ MORISON

GRASSHOPPER—
Wayne Johnson Trio
iti Records JC005
Performance: Floating and dense
Hot Spots: *Grasshopper* and *Ojai*
Bottom Line: Small group improvisation at its best

Guitarist Wayne Johnson is right on when he describes his music as "improvisational chamber music," but that shouldn't scare anyone who likes modern electric guitar played with vigor and creativity. This trio doesn't play jazz exactly. Johnson's echoing guitar, at first pigeonholed as Pat Metheny-like, floats chords and lithe lines around his pretty, atmospheric compositions, in a style both loose-limbed and strictly under control. Add to his skilled fret work the bubbling percussion of Bill Berg, with his delicate cymbal touches, and the molten gurgle of Flim Johnson's facile 5-string Alembic bass pluckings and you get a music ethereal and earthy, highly polished yet free-wheeling. Much of **Grasshopper** is intricately scored, from the chattering ensemble play of the title tune to the short bursts of uprising on *Three-Man Junta*. And all that complex scoring comes out sounding as natural as the friendly embrace of Johnson's melodies. These three players are the cream of young West Coast session men. We're fortunate that they're able to gather under Johnson's direction and create such intelligent, energetic and personal instrumental music.
(Write: ITI Records, P.O. Box 2168, Van Nuys, CA 91404.)

TOUCH—
Eurythmics
RCA AFL1-4917
Performance: Gentle and quirky
Hot Spot: *Who's That Girl?*
Bottom Line: Arty pop, guitarless and lightweight

Who hasn't noticed pictures of Eurythmics' Annie Lenox, orange hair cropped close to her skull, red lips, stylized dress? What everyone may not have noticed is the speed with which this duo's albums have scaled the charts. This cute electronic couple has been scoring with Lenox' soft, soothing, soulful voice, Dave Stewart's menagerie of toylike, machine-generated sounds and some well-crafted songs of elusive romance. Sometimes Eurythmics sound like a poor man's Grace Jones (*Regrets*), other times like a rhythm machine in search of the new world (Caribbean on *Right by Your Side*, reggae on *Cool Blue*, drastic dance on *The First Cut*). Throughout, we hear the slightly irritating hum-bum of drum machines, Eurythmics' key to America's ears. Reactions upon hearing **Touch** may vary from pleasant to violent to sedate. Mostly the music floats by, merging with the refrigerator hum. It's not rock, it's not funk, it's not even new. It's just there, on the charts and the radio, a soft touch, in one ear and out the other.

STARE AT THE SUN—
The Jon Butcher Axis
Polydor 817 493-1 Y-1
Performance: Pugnacious
Hot Spots: *Victims, Can't Tell the Dancer from the Dance* and *Wind It Up*
Bottom Line: Smart, infectious trio rock

It's hard to believe this power rock trio won't make it after listening to their second album, **Stare at the Sun.** The band presents all sorts of sparkling elements—infectious melodies, memorable riffs, smart musicianship, a variety of musical shapes enhanced by crisp production, and driving rhythms. Butcher is the band's guitarist and vocalist, the man with the Michael McDonald-in-a-hard-rock-setting voice that strains at the shifting tunes' edges. Those songs, all but one original, are primarily driving, insistent rockers boosted by Derek Blevins' aggressive, front-mixed drumming and by the odd dropped beat or measure that turns a screw in your ear as you listen. The variety of sounds and settings that Butcher creates with his guitar are notable for their feel rather than their virtuosity. His solos are often more textural than spectacular. The axis shifts from power rock in the Free/Bad Company vein to snapping grooves that walk the fine line between rockin' dance and dance rock. All in all, the band has a clean and uncompromised sound that marks them as something of an anomaly in today's commercial market—they've got a natural sound.

LOVE AT FIRST STING—
Scorpions
Mercury 814 981-1 M-1
Performance: Charged up
Hot Spots: *Bad Boys Running Wild, Crossfire* and *The Same Thrill*
Bottom Line: May be their best

There haven't been all that many metal bands from continental Europe who have successfully cracked the Anglo ranks of the headbanging elite, but on **Love at First Bite,** Scorpions show there's no doubt they belong in first class. This German quintet, led by vocalist Klaus Meine, has put together a spotlessly produced hammer of an album that sports few frills, just pounds out charged-up, rousing hard rock. The key to **Sting's** drive is that few-frills production—there are some nice echo and studio effects but they merely enhance the power of guitarist Rudolf Schenker's smart melodies (Meine does the lyrics). The band's crunching double-guitar sound is topped off with solos from both axemen. Matthias Jabs does most of the heavy work, rattling off some speed-freaking chromatic and harmonic bursts over the pounders. Schenker is used more sparingly on Scorpions' slower dramatic choruses, his emotional sustained-note, screaming more suitable than Jabs technical prowess. Together they create a formidable wall of guitar for Meine's songs of rock life and love, and lift **Love at First Sting** to the upper levels of current metal.

ABOUT FACE—David Gilmour
Columbia FC 39296

Performance: Varied and contained
Hot Spots: *All Lovers Are Deranged* and *You Know I'm Right*
Bottom Line: For Floydoids and relaxed rockers

Now entering the ring is a former leader of the Pink Floyd atmosphere of rock, guitarist David Gilmour. On his second solo album he has assembled ten original songs of various hues, hues being an appropriate word because Gilmour is more a colorist than guitar demon. His songs run from straight rock to soft ballads on nuclear holocaust and shattered love, from big productions with horns and strings to folky, acoustic tunes that should get airplay on the now too prevalent "Lite Rock" stations. Gilmour doesn't take many solos, though when he does they are unsullied, unspectacular but perfectly fitting pieces. His yelping, pained ending to *You Know I'm Right* is a fine example. Mostly he busies himself with layering guitar colorations, from yawning fills on *Until We Sleep* to simple acoustic strummings on the depressing *Near the End.* And Gilmour sings, in a Floyd-recognizable tenor. These sophisticated but melancholy songs are sometimes infused with leftover Pink Floyd pomposity, always brooding. Gilmour paints a musical picture of himself as a forlorn pessimist. Luckily you don't have to live with the guy to enjoy his record.

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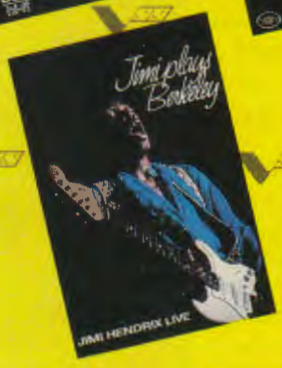

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TOM VERLAINE

Television
MARQUEE MOON Elektra 7E-1098
ADVENTURE Elektra 6E-133

Television was one of the original New York "New Wave" bands, splashing onto the national scene in 1976 along with Talking Heads, the Ramones and Blondie. In those exciting times Television emerged as the best *guitar* band of the bunch, fronted by the twin twisted leads of the band's poet, Tom Verlaine, and the band's bad boy, Richard Lloyd. The pair's electric intertwinings were the musical breath of the band—tense battles of ego and trebly, splashing solos that seemed to swirl from the turgid vortex of Verlaine's dreamy poetry, exposing guitarists struggling to get back at troubles unseen. On stage they were nervous, unravelling—Verlaine wielding rubbery tenor and guitar, Lloyd lost in his own playing, eyes closed, rocking on his toes.

The band always seemed about to burst, as the guitarists fought with their brittle musical statements. They were the first of the TIME-magazine-endorsed biggies to shatter. Fortunately, the passion in the playing of Verlaine and Lloyd was captured on two albums, 1977's **Marquee Moon,** with its jerking, spasmodic intensity, and 1978's **Adventure**, more steady and rocking. These Lps, now midline priced, are valuable remnants of one of the 70's quirkiest guitar bands, and of two personalities who have never lived up to their original incarnation.

The demons that itched in each guitarist's psyche have manifested themselves differently now. Verlaine seems to have come to terms with some of his insecurities, still recording for Elektra, still spinning his cryptic lyrics. Lloyd, after a single spectacular solo album (**Alchemy** Elecktra 6E-245), has disappeared again into the depths of New York, drugs and the past seeming to nip at his heels. Luckily these two unique and introspective battlers spoke a piece together on **Marquee Moon** and **Adventure.** They offer a glimpse of a time and an earful of innovative and searingly personal guitar.

JUNGLE—
Dwight Twilley
EMI America ST-17107

Performance: Sharp and catchy
Hot Spots: *Why You Wanna Break My Heart* and *Cry Baby*
Bottom Line: Tops in power pops

Good news for the power pop faithful—Dwight Twilley has reappeared as rockin' and innocent as ever. Sure he's updated his always full, layered sound with keyboard touches, but overall, **Jungle** has just as much of his unabashed pop simplicity and winning hook-laden melodies as anything he's done. Most impressive here is the biting, aggressive production and careful studio mastery—there are ten guitarists listed on the album's jacket and **Jungle** is filled with clever instrumental ornaments that mesh lovingly with Twilley's multitracked, quivering vocals. The songs are so gol' darn catchy you hardly notice Twilley's propensity for quilting pop riffs and cliches into originals. **Jungle** is ripe with Twilly's classic Tulsa pop. *Why You Wanna Break My Heart* throbs and pleads, Twilley's pouting voice harmonizing memorably with Susan Cowsill over a barrage of ringing guitars. *Cry Baby* features the always inventive improvising of guitar doctor Buzzy Feiten and *Don't You Love Her* is an insistent rocker, driven by a reverberating acoustic guitar strum. It's nice to hear great, straight-forward power pop these days—not new, just fun—and Twilley is the perfect provider.

PARTING SHOULD BE PAINLESS—
Roger Daltrey
Atlantic 80128-1

Performance: Well-constructed and dramatic
Hot Spots: *One Day, Parting Should Be Painless* and *Looking for You*
Bottom Line: A welcome view of a thoughtful Daltrey

After hearing **Parting Should Be Painless**, one might wonder how long Roger Daltrey had been hiding his emotions within the Who's wall of sound. His latest album is a well-conceived, dramatic and elegant set of brooding and forlorn songs that spotlights Daltrey's voice and emotions spectacularly. However, **Painless** may disappoint the Who faithful—there are a few songs that rock out (*Walking in My Sleep, Don't Wait on the Stairs*), but most of these carefully selected tunes are sophisticated productions built to accent their questions and loneliness. One could get pretty depressed listening to Daltrey sing about lost love and the pain and anger of parting, and the stark musical settings for lines like, "Is there anybody out there who is waiting for me?" add wonderfully to the misery. Musical kudos should go to drummer Alan Schwartzberg, pianist Mickey Gallagher and the tightrope guitar of Chris Spedding. But highest praise is reserved for Daltrey whose singing, typically skittering around perfect pitch, carries **Painless** and reveals a man still searching, lonely and on the run. Much like Robert Plant, Daltrey seems to have found his own place in rock and roll and no one has to ask Who?

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ON VIDEO

by Bruce Pollock

The folks at DCI Music Video in New York have just completed work on a tape that stars guitar wizard Adrian Belew. Entitled **Electronic Guitar**, it's a full sixty minutes of Adrian's guitar lessons—solo and rhythm techniques, right hand fingerboard, guitar synthesizers, etc. Grab it from *DCI Music Video, 541 Avenue of the Americas, NYC 10011*. . . . The folks at Polygram who gave us John Lennon's poignant *Nobody Told Me* and ABC's pointless **Mantrap**, have a bunch of exciting clips sets for viewing, among them *Rock You Like a Hurricane*, from the Scorpions, *20th Century Boy*, from Girlschool, *Runaway*, by Bon-Jovi and *Don't Say Goodnight*, by the Jon Butcher Axis. . . . Available for Beatle freaks and all other freaks, from MPI Productions, **A HARD DAY'S NIGHT**. Enough said? Write to them at *15825 Rob Roy Drive, Oak Forest, IL 60452*. The tab is $69.95. . . . MTV added a countdown show in March (Tuesday nights at 10 (ET), repeated Friday night at 11); now they've got a Music Video Awards Show set to roll. . . . Watch for **The Beast of I.R.S.**, a compilation video album featuring the Go-Gos, Wall of Voodoo, the Alarm, the Cramps, the Buzzcocks, Lords of the New Church and English Beat. . . . There's a Roxy Music concert tape just out from RCA/Columbia; from Vestron, **One From the Road**, by the Kinks and **Pink Floyd at Pompeii**. . . . The folks at Instant Replay, otherwise known as **The Men in the Blue Suits**, have produced the first rock video version of **60 Minutes**. Mixing the humorous (a profile of Chicago deejay Jonathan Brandmier) with the serious (footage of strifetorn El Salvador, set to Pat Travers), they've produced a superior rock package. It'll cost you $29.95, from *2980 McFarlane Road, Cocoanut Grove, FL 33133*. The 2nd edition should be out soon. ■

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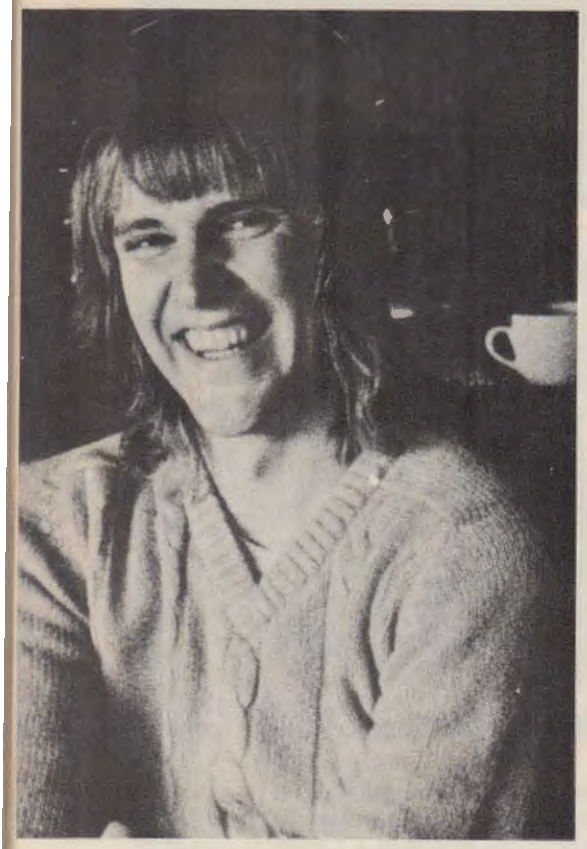


Performance Notes

The Spirit of Radio

This song is an excellent vehicle for Rush's progressive rock penchant. It makes use of varied textural approaches, which keep interest at a high point in spite of the trio context. These include meter changes, feel changes, and a splendid example of Lifeson's use of effects, including chorus, doubling, flanging, delay and the wah-wah.

The wah-wah is applied extensively throughout and the pedal is used in two distinct ways. 1. Open and close the filter with the accented notes (♩) to create a vocal phrasing. 2. Open and close the pedal in a very rhythmic pattern (marked ◆ to symbolize the throw of the pedal) reminiscent of the "Shaft/Hendrix" school of wah artistry.

The bend in bar six is a slow raising of the pitch for a major third (G to B); The following measure makes use of a slow minor third bend (D to F) combined with the slow opening of the wah filter, followed by a slow slide up the fingerboard again, in tandem with the opening of the filter. Very vocalesque.

—WOLF MARSHALL

I seldom stay low on the neck in this song. It's all mid-neck. Most of the chords are suspended with the B and E ringing out. Keep in mind that the high E and B ring out even when you play the E chord on the 7th fret, or the B chord on the 7th fret. The whole beginning of *The Spirit of Radio* is pulls; there's very little pick movement.

—ALEX LIFESON

Dust in the Wind

The whole trick to this song is the right hand picking pattern; it's an old thing called Travis picking and there's a certain pattern with the right hand to make the whole song work. If you don't get that right you'll never be able to play it. You can learn the chords for your left hand, which are very simple. But once you've got the right hand pattern down you've got it made. Learning to pick with my right hand is how I wrote the song. I actually wrote it as a fingerpicking exercise.

—KERRY LIVGREN

The accompaniment to this beautiful song is a fingerpicking style commonly called Travis* picking played on an acoustic guitar. The italic letters represent the right hand fingers: p = thumb, i = index, m = middle, a = ring finger. Although the tablature may look confusing at first, practice the following pattern away from the guitar till it comes smoothly.

1 A pinch with the thumb and middle finger
2 thumb
3 index
4 thumb
5 middle
6 thumb
7 index

No. 1 is long, the other numbers short. That is, the rhythm is

Once you can do this, apply it to the guitar. You'll find that each pattern takes ½ measure or two beats.
*named after Merle Travis, the great country guitarist.

—DAN FOX

Burnin' for You

Burnin' presents us with some interesting things to look at for melody and technique. The first thing to notice is the use of non-chord tones in the guitar melody and solo parts. Non-chord tones are notes that aren't part of the chord supplying the basic harmony. They are used to create tension in a melody or a chord. For example in a C chord, the chord is made up of the notes C, E and G. If you add the note D to the melody above the chord, that D works as an extension of the chord, resulting in a thicker overall sound. We see examples of this in the first bar where you see an F5 (notes: F, C, F) and in the melody (top part) the notes E and G predominate. Use of different notes outside the basic harmony can make for interesting new sounds. You've got to be careful as you experiment with them because a little can go a long way.

After the second ending in bars 22-24 in the guitar solo, we are treated to a made-to-order exercise in pull-offs with the open string. The only tricky thing is to watch the change in fingering in bar 23 to bar 24 from 1, 3, 1, 0 to 1, 4, 1, 0. Practice bar 24 separately as a good exercise for strengthening your fourth finger.

—BRAD STRICKLAND

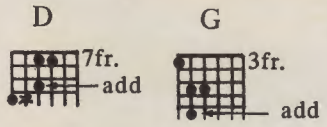
The rhythm guitar riff in the verses was a production effect. That exact sound would be very hard to duplicate live, in fact, we don't even try. It's

like a reggae type chink on two and four, and in the studio we sent the chink into a ton of echo and then manually gated off on the two and the four of every measure to get that particular cadence the way it sits. Live you just get the chink on the two and the four; you don't get that after halo effect. So I'd just say not to bother.

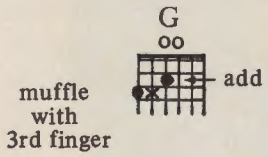
—BUCK DHARMA

Memphis, Tennessee

This early rock classic has two guitar parts. The rhythm part is based on only two chords.



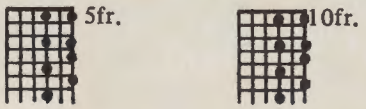
The G chord requires a long reach. If you have trouble with it, try substituting.



Make sure to muffle the 5th string on the D chord formation. This is done by letting the fleshy part of the 4th finger touch the 5th string (see "x" on diagram).

The lead guitar part is based on a series of broken 6ths.

On the D chord On the G chord



These double notes can be played simultaneously using the pick for the 3rd string and the ring finger to pluck the 1st string, or by muffling the 2nd string—a technique similar to the 5th string muffle described above.

—DAN FOX

Continuum

This is a bass guitarist's tour de force. Jaco has all sorts of things happening here, counterlines, harmonics and sophisticated harmonies. Things to remember while playing *Continuum*. Play freely, giving more emphasis to the phrases as opposed to keeping strict time. To understand how this works, listen to the record and watch the music go by. You'll see how Jaco stays with a phrase and moves on only when he's good and ready to.

Pluck the notes with stems going down with your thumb, as this frees your other fingers to play the melody notes.

All the harmonics are natural and should pose no problems.

Use vibrato on the notes of longer duration. When you listen to Jaco, you'll hear a very wide vibrato. Follow the directions in the tablature explanation for vibrato. Try changing the speed of your finger vibrato to get the sound that suits you best.

—BRAD STRICKLAND

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Jim Bush

BILLY SHEEHAN OF TALAS

Is this Guy the Eddie Van Halen of Bass or What?

by Steve Gett

Despite the continual emergence of hot lead guitarists onto the hard rock scene, very rarely does a new bass player come along and manage to create a buzz. One exception to the rule however is Billy Sheehan, leader of the Buffalo-based outfit Talas, who has been referred to by some as the 'Edward Van Halen of the bass world.'

Although he has still yet to attain major recognition, anyone who has ever witnessed the man in action will surely attest that he is one of the most dynamic bassists in the business. Employing feedback and harmonics, together with other fretboard techniques generally reserved for six-string criminals, Sheehan is capable of extracting a weird and wonderful array of sounds from his instrument.

"What I'm trying to do is to take bass guitar into an area that it's never been in before, while still keeping its basic function as a backing instrument," he proclaims. "Straightforward guitarists play chords *and* solos, while bassists tend to be just in the background, and I see no reason why we shouldn't be more upfront at times."

Furthermore, Sheehan has been quoted as saying that his goal is "to someday play solo bass for half an hour in front of thousands of people, without boring any of them!"

But if Billy Sheehan is so talented, then why hasn't he reached the dizzy heights of mega-stardom,I hear you ask? Well, in spite of the fact that he's had numerous offers from named groups and has enjoyed stints with UFO, The Michael Schenker Group and (now defunct) Canadian rockers Max Webster, it seems that he's determined to make it to the top with Talas.

In an era when Hendrix and Clapton inspired many a young lad to take up electric guitar, it's still curious that Billy's heart was set on playing bass.

"I actually figured it looked neater than guitar because it was

Jim Bush

big and the amps were bigger!" he chuckles. "Also there were probably ten guitarists around for every one bass player and I've always tried to do the thing that was a little more uncommon.

"In fact, when I eventually got my first bass, I used to listen to a lot of things that weren't mainstream—people like Sonny Rollins and some really far out jazz, plus a lot of Bach keyboard stuff—and I would try to apply what I heard onto the instrument. Most of the bass parts on rock and roll records would be real simple and after a while I'd get tired of playing them. By listening to all kinds of different things, it gave me an unusual grounding."

During his early teens, Billy played in several local rock groups, but again it wasn't long before he found himself eager to explore other territories.

"I got into a real weird thing with some friends of mine," he remembers, "which was basically a jazz trio featuring bass, drums and sax. There were no chordal instruments and we played things like early Zappa, Herbie Mann and Buddy Rich adaptations. We even came up with a jazz interpretation of Hendrix. Even though I'd opted for bass, Hendrix was still a big influence on me. He was the first person I ever saw in concert. I've always liked heaviness in any type of music, even classical has some really heavy pieces which are very dramatic and powerful, and that's why Jimi Hendrix appealed to me."

Billy returned to playing rock music in 1972, when he formed his first professional band, The Tweeds, which by '74 had evolved into Talas. Aside from Sheehan, the Talas line-up comprised guitarist Dave Constantino and drummer Paul Varga, with all three musicians sharing the vocal work. For the next few years they established a strong following on the local club circuit, but found it extremely difficult to break out of their home territory.

Consequently, Billy decided to take a year off from the band and spent a brief period working with Max Webster. He came back to Talas at the beginning of 1979 and it was at this juncture that the band recorded their first Lp. However, before it was released, Sheehan got a call from ex-UFO guitarist Michael Schenker, inviting him over to England to help on his debut solo project.

"Talas had opened for UFO in Buffalo a couple of times and that's how I first got together with Michael," he explains. "Then, while I was with Max Webster, I found myself bumping into him again at a gig. At that point he was about to leave UFO. We talked about working together and he said he'd be in touch, but I didn't hear from him for another couple of years."

Billy teamed up with Schenker at the end of '79 and there followed a month of intense rehearsals with singer Gary Barden and Heart drummer Denny Carmassi. It had all the promise of being a killer band, but then Michael suffered a complete nervous breakdown, was hospitalized and the whole project ground to an abrupt halt. By the time the bassist had flown back to Buffalo, the debut **Talas** album had surfaced on a self-financed independent label. It hardly set the world on fire though, and according to Billy, "was a kind of directionless package that did well locally and nowhere else."

Nevertheless, Talas had managed to hook up with the Premier Booking Agency, which was to result in two months on the road with Van Halen, during the L.A. rockers' **Women and Children First** tour in the fall of 1980.

"That was one hell of an experience," enthuses Billy, "certainly one that I'll never forget. In actual fact, Eddie walked into the dressing room on the first night and said, 'Which one of you guys is Billy Sheehan?' He'd obviously heard about me and that made me feel pretty good."

A lot of people have likened Billy's style to Van Halen's, but how does the bassist react to such comparisons?

"Well, I take them as compliments," he answers, "but I'd also like to defend myself, because I was doing that stuff in 1974, before Van Halen released their first album. (Sheehan is referring to the 'hammer-on' and 'crossover' techniques, generally attributed to young Edward.) When I first heard Eddie I must admit I was a bit disappointed, because I thought I was the only person who did all that.

"I certainly don't mean to be an Ed Van Halen clone, and in a lot of ways I try to come up with new things he hasn't done. I give him a lot of respect though, because he is a great guitarist. He's been very good to me and has been extremely complimentary towards my playing."

Talas certainly gained some useful exposure on the Van Halen dates, but, alas, without the backup of a major recording deal, they were unable to sustain any real kind of impact. Indeed, the next two years proved to be a period of considerable frustration for the band, and it wasn't until the beginning of 1983 that they finally re-emerged from the doldrums with a new Lp, after securing a deal with the independent Important Records label. Titled **Sink Your Teeth into That,** it was by no means an earth-shattering platter, but boasted a number of solid hard rock tunes and was highlighted by Sheehan's epic *NV43345* bass solo—a three-minute 'Bach meets Hendrix' style instrumental, in which he blends classical passages with moments of extreme metallic mayhem.

Billy was particularly proud of *NV43345* and it certainly ex-

"PAY ATTENTION TO PEOPLE LIKE BILLY SHEEHAN FROM THE ROCK GROUP TALAS. THERE IS NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT BILLY WILL BE THE NEXT BIG NAME IN ROCK BASS. HE PLAYS SOLO BASS LIKE A GUITAR PLAYER WOULD, COMPLETE WITH LIGHTNING FAST LINES AND CHORDAL ACCOMPANIMENT. VERY HOT, THAT BOY."
Jeff Berlin, Guitar Player Magazine

emplified his unorthodox style of bass playing. "It had been a long process for me to get exactly what I wanted out of the instrument," he maintains. "I'd been through just about every piece of equipment that's made for a good distorted sound. Most of the time when a bass distorts, the sound is real muddy, but I managed to come up with a combination of things where I found I could get a lot of guitar-type sounds—screaming feedback, harmonics and all that stuff.

"The bass has two separate outputs: one for regular bass sounds and the other for all the wild stuff. I basically use two different amps, so that I can play a lot of different notes and still keep them clean. Right now I use a Fender Precision Bass with a Telecaster Bass neck and an added Gibson EBO pickup."

Coinciding with the release of **Sink Your Teeth into That,** Billy was asked to help UFO out on a European tour, following Pete Way's departure from the outfit. Sheehan immediately accepted the invitation, which turned out to be a prudent move, since he had never performed outside North America and was able to promote his own talents as well as spread the word on Talas. Consequently, **Sink Your Teeth** made a strong impact on the British heavy metal charts.

When Billy returned to the States, he spent the next few months on the road with Talas and at the end of the summer the band went into Toronto's Phase One studios to make another album. However, by then the group had started to experience internal problems that were soon to result in a complete break-up.

Undeterred by the departures of Varga and Constantino, Sheehan decided to form a new Talas and swiftly set about recruiting fresh members. Checking out the local talent in Buffalo, he came across vocalist Phil Naro and drummer Mark Miller, but finding a guitarist proved a difficult task. "I looked all over the place for the right one," claims Billy, "and then a good friend of mine phoned to say that she knew a guy called Mitch Perry who was living with a friend of hers in Los Angeles. Strangely enough, my manager called up a few minutes later and said that Mitch had been recommended to him. So I made a few inquiries, talked with him; he sent me a tape and I loved the way he played."

Mitch Perry's previous track record includes work with ex-UFO/Michael Schenker Group keyboard player, Paul Raymond, Quiet Riot's Kevin Dubrow, Alphonso Johnson and the L.A. metal band Steeler. As soon as he arrived in Buffalo, he clicked with Billy straight away and the bassist was confident that he'd made the right choice.

"Mitch is a great soloist," reckons Sheehan, "and he's also a real solid chord man. What I particularly like about him is that he's pretty unique in his phrasing and is a very non-cliched player, who puts his solos together as pieces of music, rather than just mindlessly wailing out."

The new line-up started gigging on the East Coast at the end of last year and proved to be a vast improvement on the previous one. Mitch Perry has strong potential in the axe world and the addition of a frontman has taken a good deal of pressure off Billy's shoulders.

In December they recorded two shows with the Record Plant mobile studio, at the hard rock club L'Amour in Queens, New York, to release as an Lp entitled **Live Speed on Ice.** "I just figured it was the best way to introduce the new band as quickly as possible," asserts Billy.

The live record blends older Talas material with several new cuts, and also features solo spots from both Sheehan and Perry. Whether it will lead to a major deal remains to be seen, for in this cut-throat world of rock and roll one can never be too sure about what the future holds.

Whatever happens though, Billy Sheehan is not a man to be ignored, since he's an incredibly talented musician and possesses definite star qualities. ■

Jim Bush

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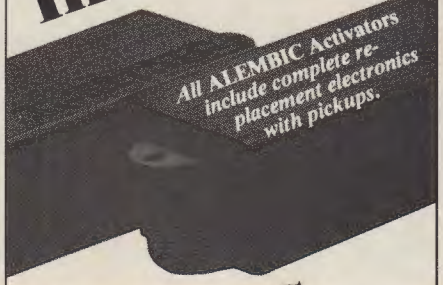

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On the Case

by Roger Sadowsky

Roger Sadowsky is a professional luthier and repairman in N.Y.C. Current clientele includes Joan Jett, Hall & Oates, Paul Simon and George Benson.

Fender Squire Series

For the last few years, Fender has taken a serious beating from Japanese "Fender clone" companies including ESP, Fernandez, and Tokai. Copyright lawsuits and seizures of guitar shipments by U.S. Customs officials only inconvenienced the foreign competition. Fender fought back with new management and revamped its line into the Standard, Vintage and Elite lines, but only the Vintage line created any player interest. In a bold move, Fender has introduced the Squire series, a line made in Japan. These instruments not only offer head-to-head competition to the imports, but they raise the interesting possibility of devastating the sales of the American-made Fenders.

The Squire Strat is reminiscent of a 70's model Fender Strat. The sample reviewed had a black body with a black pickguard, knobs and pickup covers, tremolo bridge and a rosewood fingerboard with medium-size frets. It featured the larger size headstock, bullet style truss rod and 3-bolt neck plate with micro-tilt neck adjustment. The only paradox on the instrument was the flat, rather than curved, joint between the fingerboard and the neck. This flat joint is only seen on Strats from the early 60s, never on models from the 70s. The shape of the neck was very comfortable, and the fingerboard trueness, fretwork and set-up were all excellent. It played well all over the neck, and its medium-light weight was comfortable to hold. In short, an excellent basic Strat.

The Squire Tele had a translucent blonde finish revealing the grain of the traditional ash Tele body. It was complimented by a white pickguard, traditional three-saddled bridge, and a maple neck attached with a four-bolt neck plate. The fingerboard trueness and set-up work was all first-rate. The fretwork was excellent and there was no excessive finish build-up along the sides of the frets. A fine basic Tele by any standard.

The Squire P-Bass had a black body and pickguard, a rosewood fingerboard with medium frets and a four-bolt neck plate. It was medium-light in weight and very comfortable to play. A straight-ahead instrument that did everything it's supposed to.

The Squire line of Fender clones are an exceptional value. All three of these instruments have the amazing list price of $369.00. Even more incredible than the price is the quality of the workmanship, which rivals and sometimes exceeds the domestic Fenders. Gee, I wonder what the Japanese could do if they decided to make automobiles? FIVE STARS!!! ■

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PLUGGING IN

with Elliott Randall

Elliott Randall is a prominent New York studio guitarist, who has worked with Steely Dan, Ashford & Simpson and Carly Simon.

The Gallien-Krueger 250 ML

No wordy intros today, just straight to the point. This is the most impressive solid state guitar amp I've tested. The 250 ML is compact. It weighs in at 22 lbs and measures 13.75" x 9" x 6". These dimensions make it appear at a distance to be a rather sophisticated portable tape cassette player of the midsize class. It's even a strong contender for the amplifier beauty contest. So much for looks.

Let me tell you about how it sounds. Holy Toledo, what a smoker!! This baby packs a 50-watts-per-channel punch with a great variety of tonal possibilities. It's got one input with two channel options. Channel one is the cleaner of the two, while channel two can get as dirty as you would probably want to get. There are preset stereo chorus and stereo echo settings. They're great, too. The combination of the FX with the distorted channel two setting is pretty reminiscent of the Tom Scholz Rockman Sound, which is meant as a compliment. The equalization choices are well thought out. The four bands of EQ are 120 Hz, 500 Hz, 2 Khz and 8 Khz. All are important tonal ranges to the electric guitarist. It sports two 6½" Pyle speakers, which are quite ballsy. You can purchase a compatible "SCL" cabinet with two 12" Celestion speakers.

I could go on and on, but by this time most of you are aware that I favor tube amps over their solid state brothers. But let me tell you, this GK 250 ML is world class. It lists for $659 and rates a very clear five out of five.

Peavey Basic 40

Bassists need amplifiers too!! In a recent muso/economic poll conducted in the free world, it was disclosed that most bass players are really broke. They have a real need for inexpensive, quality amplification. So Peavey has risen to meet the challenge. Enter the Basic 40 Amplifier. True to form, Peavey has once again blended the musically tasteful with the economically feasible.

On a serious note, the Peavey Basic 40 is 40 watts of solid state good bass amplifier. The package is as follows, two inputs: high and low gain, and four bands of EQ. The bands of Low, Mid, High and Presence supply the user with a large number of tonal options.

There are two gain controls: Pre and Post (master). The Pre-Gain control also has a pull switch for added brightness. I was quite impressed with the warm bass response of this amp, as with its crystal clear reproduction of high end sounds. The two also work really well together.

The Basic 40 has one 12" speaker which held its own up through moderate volumes. I would have liked to have heard punch at a little higher volumes. So while I wouldn't be inclined to use it for an arena gig, it would certainly perform well in smaller club venues and rehearsal situations. All in all it's an impressive package, particularly considering its low list price of $199.50. I rate it 4½ out of five. ■

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- 3 GOOD
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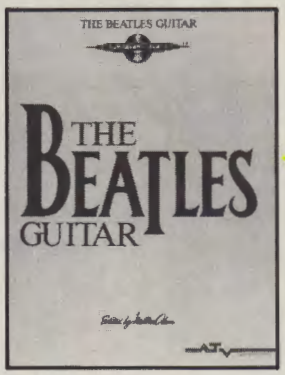

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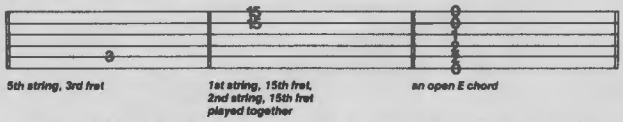
TABLATURE EXPLANATION

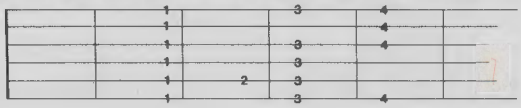
Definitions

Tablature A six line staff that graphically represents the guitar fingerboard. By placing a number on the appropriate line, the string and fret of any note can be indicated. For example:

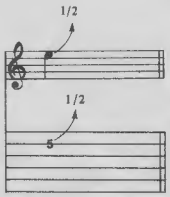


Position Position markings are given in Roman numerals above each excerpt. Remember that the position simply means the fret that your 1st finger plays on. For example, II pos. means that your 1st finger plays all the notes on the 2nd fret, the 2nd finger plays the notes on the 3rd fret, the 3rd finger on the 4th fret, etc. One fret for each finger.

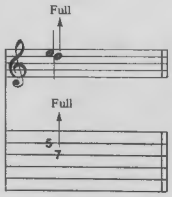
Before attempting these solos, make sure that you know the blues scale, the scale which is the basis of almost all rock solos. Here it is in diagram form:



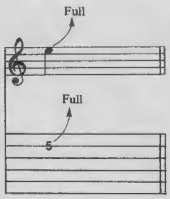
Definitions for Special Guitar Notation (For both traditional and tablature guitar lines)



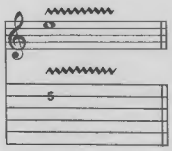
BEND: Strike the note and bend up ½ step (1 fret).



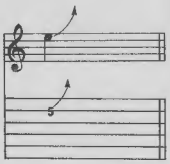
UNISON BEND: The lower note is struck slightly before the higher. It is then bent to the pitch of the second note. They are on adjacent strings.



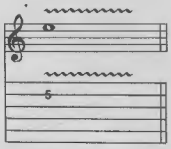
BEND: Strike the note and bend up a whole step (2 frets).



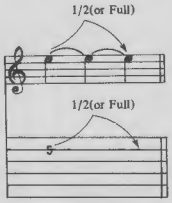
SHAKE OR EXAGGERATED VIBRATO: The pitch is rapidly varied by using a tremolo bar.



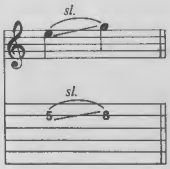
BEND: Strike the note and bend up an indefinite amount.



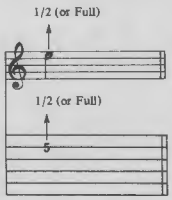
SHAKE OR EXAGGERATED VIBRATO: The string is vibrated by rapidly bending and releasing a note with the fret hand.



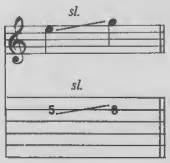
LEGATO BEND AND RELEASE: Strike the note. Bend up ½ (or full) step, then back to the original note. All three notes are tied; Only the first note is struck.



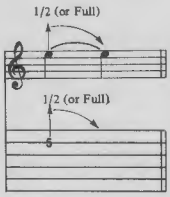
SLIDE: The first note is struck and then the fret hand moves up the same string to the location of the second pitch using the same finger. The second note is not struck.



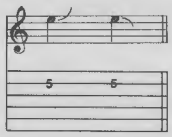
GHOST BEND: Bend the note up ½ (or full) step; then strike it.



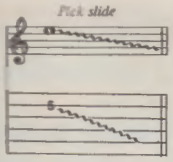
SLIDE: Same as above slide, but the 2nd note is struck.



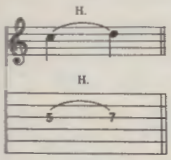
GHOST BEND AND RELEASE: Bend the note up ½ (or full) step. Strike it and release the bend back to the original note.



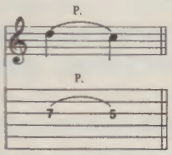
SLIDE: Slide to an indefinite pitch. Fret hand gradually releases pressure as the slide is played.



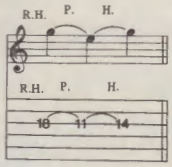
PICK SLIDE: The edge of the pick is rubbed down the length of the string. A scratchy sound is produced.



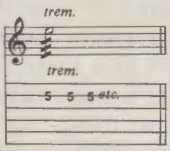
HAMMER ON: The 1st note is struck. Then the 2nd is fretted on the same string in a continuous motion. Two fingers are used.



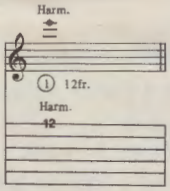
PULL-OFF: The 1st note is struck; The 2nd one sounds without picking. Both fingers are initially placed on the notes to be sounded. The fret hand finger pulls the string to sound the 2nd note.



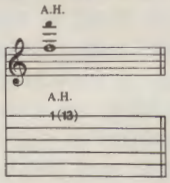
ARPEGGIATED HAMMER ON: Hammer on with middle finger of the *right* hand; Pull off to left hand 1st finger; hammer on to 4th finger left hand. This can occur on any series of three notes on one string.



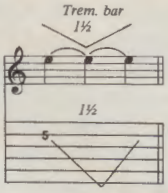
TREMOLO PICKING: The note is struck as rapidly and continuously as possible.



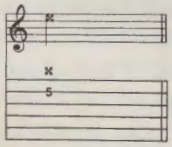
NATURAL HARMONIC: The fret hand lightly touches the string over a designated fret. Then it is struck. A chime-like sound is produced.



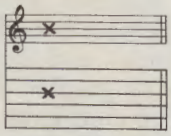
ARTIFICIAL HARMONIC: The fret hand fingers the indicated note normally. The pick hand produces the harmonic by using a finger to lightly touch the string at the fret indicated in parentheses and plucking with another finger.



Pitch of a note or chord is dropped up to a minor 3rd (3 frets) using the tremolo bar.



MUTED NOTE: The note is muted by the picking hand lightly touching the string(s) just above the bridge.



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Continued from page 59

GUITAR: Did it take you a while to get used to playing a Fender-style guitar?

ALEX: It took me about three years to feel comfortable playing it. I've used a 335 or a 355 almost from the beginning. One night we were playing with BOC at Nassau Colosseum and one of the speaker horns fell down on my doubleneck and then over my 335, which was my backup at the time. I had to get another guitar, so I thought I'd try a Strat. It was like picking up a large piece of wood. I didn't know what to do with it. I thought at the time, "This is a real mistake." I hardly ever used it and never felt comfortable when I did. Along the way I put a Floyd Rose on it, took out the back pickup and put in an L-500 humbucker by Bill Lawrence and changed the neck to one made by Sharp, which is a company in Ottawa. It's a flat rosewood neck, close to a Gibson. I didn't put any lacquer on it. To clean it I use a piece of .400 sandpaper and just go back and forth a few times. It's nice and smooth and you can feel the wood as you move your hand across it. The only Fender aspect of it is the body and the two Fender pickups in front. The Bill Lawrence pickup has such a high output that you can put your guitar on 8 and switch to the Fender pickups without having to bring the volume down and it will have a nice clean, clear tone.

GUITAR: How did you adjust to the Floyd Rose bridge?

ALEX: It was a bit of a pain at first. I didn't like the locking nut, so when I switched necks, I didn't bother putting the locking bridge on and I haven't had any problems. I use a bit of graphite on the nut and just keep an eye on it.

GUITAR: Do you ever use the 355 or the Howard Roberts?

ALEX: I used the 355 on the last tour for three songs, but I do use it more in the studio. The Howard Roberts Fusion guitar is the backup. It's got a radically different feel to me now that I've grown accustomed to using the Fender. I never thought that would happen. I was such a Gibson man all the way. But I'm happy with the way the Fender has worked out. I've got it to sound much closer to a Gibson, with that sustain and meatiness, while retaining the clarity and brilliance of a Fender.

GUITAR: With instruments, amps and effects it's easy to get new input because so many new products come out every year. But where do you go to get new musical input that translates to that next plateau jump as a player?

ALEX: Nowhere in particular and everywhere in general. I hear so much, so many different styles of guitar playing that can influence me. Andy Summers has a good sense of combinations and selections of notes. His playing fits well into the context of their songs. Edge from U2 is right up front, an aggressive, straight-ahead, all-out player. Adrian Belew is like the Carl Sagan of guitarists. With him it's not only the selection of his notes but also the selection of his sounds. Midge Ure from Ultravox has a sense of feel that I like. I like the way his guitar sounds take up space. There are so many who you can listen to and pick things up from without necessarily copping a lick. It's more of an attitude about approaching the instrument and seeing what you can do with it, where you can go. I've always thought Steve Howe was great but I never wanted to play like him. Alan Holdsworth is dangerous for me to hear. I was most influenced by him when he was with Bruford. I started to pick up what he does with a vibrato arm and I have to be careful that I don't just copy him.

GUITAR: What would you like to be remembered for in the long run?

ALEX: I feel embarrassed by a question like that. I can't imagine what I would want my contribution to be because I don't feel I have that much to contribute. I do what I do the best I can. I enjoy playing. Perhaps if I could draw a line between being a rhythm and a lead guitarist in a group and do it well, maybe people would look at my style and say that's a good way to fill up the space and make more out of a part. If that happens I guess I will have accomplished something. It's hard to tell right now because I'm still in school. ■

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Eddie Van Halen on *Beat It*, by Michael Jackson
Mick Jagger on *You're So Vain*, by Carly Simon
Sonny Rollins on *Waiting on a Friend*, by the Rolling Stones
John Bonham on *Old Man River*, by Jeff Beck
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Looks That Kill—Victoria Principal
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Hyperactive—Jane Fonda
That's All—Greg Lake

Next Month

With Words & Music

Motley Crue
Iron Maiden
Stevie Ray Vaughan

Flight of Icarus
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